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THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

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Preface

IN this book I have tried to cover the whole field of the Philosophy of Religion as comprehensively as was possible within the limits of the space at my disposal. I have dealt with religion on its historical and psychological sides as well as from the more strictly philosophical point of view, for I realize that we are not in a position to philosophise about religion until we have paid some attention to the study of its history and psychology. The programme I set before myself was thus a somewhat ambitious one for a book of this size. But in spite of the vastness of the ground covered, I have endeavoured to make the book something more than a mere skeleton or sketch, and have aimed at such fulness of treatment as would insure lucidity. How far I have succeeded it is for others to say. No one can be more conscious than I am of the inadequacy of this attempt to deal with a big subject in a small book. It was inevitable that, in spite of the desire to be comprehensive, there should be some serious gaps owing to the exigencies of space. For instance, the idea of personal immortality, which many regard as crucial, has scarcely been touched upon.

As to method, I have made very considerable use of what has been called "the method of construction through criticism." That is, instead of simply elaborating my own views and theories, I

have frequently adopted what I hope will prove to be (especially to the beginner) the more illuminating method of developing my own positive views through a critical survey of certain representative and influential theories. Apart from the work of exceptionally original and creative minds, the best results in science and philosophy seem to be achieved by corporate thinking rather than by highly independent and individualistic work. And to reach one's own views through a critical examination of the views of others is, in a sense, to think corporately.

Where the field and the literature are so vast, it would be presumption for the author to claim to be equally at home in all the departments of the subject here dealt with. In every part of the book my indebtedness to other writers is great, but I am conscious that some sections—*e.g.*, the anthropological—are more "second-hand" than others. It only remains for me to express my sincerest thanks to the Rev. Professor David Phillips, M.A., of the Theological College, Bala, for his kindness in reading the whole book in manuscript and in giving many valuable suggestions, and to Mr. Roland Thomas, M.A., of the County School, Brecon, for help in reading the proofs.

D. MIALL EDWARDS.

MEMORIAL COLLEGE,
BRECON,
June 7th, 1924.

Chapter I — Problem and Scope of Philosophy of Religion

IT was said long ago, and it has been frequently repeated, that "the proper study of mankind is man." And the study of man can never be complete unless it includes the study of religion, for there is no more widespread, impressive, or significant thing in his history than religion. Whatever may be one's private opinion concerning religion or one's personal attitude to it, one cannot but admit that it is a most important and outstanding feature of human life. It is, indeed, in many ways the biggest thing in the world. Whoever takes a comprehensive survey of human experience soon discovers that religion has from the earliest times and throughout the ages occupied a central place in life and history. However crude religion may have been in origin, and however gross the superstitions with which it has often been associated, its omnipresence and centrality in the history of the race are facts to be reckoned with. In a sense, as Comte admitted, religion embraces the whole of existence, and the history of religion resumes the entire history of human development.* We should not be far wrong in saying with Max Müller that the true history of man is the history of religion.

In recent times a large number of diligent in-

* *Positive Policy*, vol. ii., p. 119, quoted by A. S. Pringle-Pattison in *The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy* (1917), p. 137.

vestigators in the fields of anthropology, the history of religions, the comparative study of religion, the psychology of religion, and in the study of human life and culture generally, have accumulated an enormous mass of facts about the religious rites, customs, activities, beliefs, sentiments, aspirations, of men and of communities. Philosophy, which claims to be the apex of the whole process of intellectual inquiry, cannot rest satisfied with a mere accumulation of facts as such, or even with a more or less complete classification of facts and a grouping of them into coherent systems of phenomena by the discovery of the laws of cause and effect or of uniformity of sequence which binds them together. This work of accumulation, classification, and generalization is the task of science. But the task of philosophy is to penetrate into the ultimate *meaning* of facts. Facts are records of experiences, or, more accurately, a fact is the objective aspect of that which in its subjective aspect is an experience or an element within experience; for of facts that no one has ever in any way experienced we can know nothing and say nothing. The sciences are all concerned with particular *aspects* of human experience, abstracted for the purpose in hand from experience as a whole. Philosophy has, however, for its subject-matter the *whole* of experience, and seeks to apprehend its ultimate meaning, validity, and ground. It is not simply the sum of all the sciences regarded as another science. It seeks to transcend the particular sciences by contemplating the universe from the point of view of the totality

of interests or the inclusive experience. Science is abstract, analytic, and is governed by a selective interest; philosophy is concrete, synthetic, comprehensive, and seeks an insight into the meaning of the whole.

Now, religion, too, is in one sense an aspect of experience, and so comes within the scope of science, or of a whole group of studies which may be comprehended in such a term as the Science of Religion. But in common with all other facts it demands philosophical interpretation, in order that its real significance may be understood, and that it may be set in its proper place within the context of experience as a whole. Moreover, religion claims to be more than one fact among many, more than one kind of experience side by side with other kinds on the same plane. The religious consciousness, at least in its advanced stages, claims to be in an intimate sense *en rapport* with the ultimate nature of things. By this we do not mean that religious experience is nothing more than an intellectual attitude to reality or a theory of the universe. Oftentimes, indeed, it is intellectual only in a very secondary and subordinate sense. Doubtless feeling lies nearer than thought to the living centre of religious consciousness. Nevertheless, religion always *implies* an interpretation of the nature of reality; it involves an interpretation of the meaning of the universe in terms of its value for human life. The religious consciousness does not merely "accept the universe"—on its face value. It postulates beneath the surface, or beyond

the veil of things visible, an inexhaustible fund of spiritual resource and power which is available for the practical support of man in life's warfare and for the satisfaction of his deep-rooted needs. It looks "not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." It makes vast demands on the universe upon the assumption that the universe is capable of satisfying those demands. Even if and when it approaches reality through feeling rather than through thought, the feeling itself is a valuation and therefore an interpretation of reality. Religion is man's reaction to the totality of things as he apprehends it, but that very reaction implies an apprehension. It is a way of life rather than a theory, but a way of life which by implication contains or at least suggests a theory. Hence it is that, more than any other class of facts, the facts of religion are a perpetual challenge to philosophy, compelling it to investigate the claims of religion to be a valid interpretation of truth and reality and to examine its assumptions. The Philosophy of Religion is the response of philosophy to this challenge. It is a philosophical inquiry into the nature, function, value, and truth of religious experience, and into the adequacy of religion as an expression of the nature of ultimate reality.

Like all philosophy, the Philosophy of Religion must find its data in the phenomena of real experience, and must also endeavour to pass beyond the phenomena as such in order to evaluate them in the light of ultimate principles and to discover their

ground in the nature of reality. Its task is therefore twofold: first, the historico-psychological investigation of religion as a normal and practically universal fact of human life; secondly, the metaphysical investigation of the relation of religious experience to the real truth and nature of things. These two departments of our subject are necessary to each other, and each is incomplete without the other, when viewed as contributions to any philosophy of religion which aims at being complete. Just as Kant declared in a famous sentence that "thoughts without content are empty, perceptions without conceptions are blind," so we may say that a philosophy of religion without history is empty, a history of religion without philosophy is blind.

Sometimes the temptation has been to speculate prematurely on the nature, function, and validity of religion, without adequate knowledge of the concrete and varied facts of religion in its historical development and its psychological manifestations. This is a case of "conceptions without perceptions," which are "empty," void of that content which only a knowledge of the facts can give. It is like trying to make bricks without straw, or like building a castle in the air without any solid foundation on which the imposing structure may rest. "Without the materials supplied by anthropology and history, [we] could do nothing more than erect a specious edifice of mere hypotheses and fancies, an amusement by no means harmless, in which the speculative philosophers of a former

generation used to delight."* Our first duty, therefore, is to gather the necessary material from the wide realms of anthropology, sociology, the history and comparative study of religions, the psychology of religion, and to seek to discover some principle of classification and some law of religious evolution by means of which we may be able to arrange the bewildering mass of material in an intelligible form so as to bring forth some sort of order out of the apparent chaos of incoherent facts. We can only discover what religion is by a knowledge of the way in which it works and has worked in various environments and at different stages of man's progress.

On the other hand, the mere gathering and arranging of the material does not constitute a philosophy of religion. For "perceptions without conceptions are blind." We have to interpret and evaluate this infinitely complicated system of arranged facts and experiences, and we have to face the question how far the religious conceptions of mankind correspond to truth. Some modern thinkers tend to regard this more purely metaphysical problem as beyond the scope of the Philosophy of Religion, and, indeed, beyond the competence of the human mind. The tendency of thinkers of the more empirical type—for instance, Ritschlians and Pragmatists—is to deny the necessity or possibility of a speculative interpretation of religion, at least in the sense of a metaphysic of the

* C. P. Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion* (1897), vol. i., p. 13.

Absolute, and to limit the task of the Philosophy of Religion to the description and arrangement of religious phenomena. The objective truth of religion must, it is claimed, be left undecided. It is enough that its functional character in human evolution be exhibited and the practical value of its effects on social life be traced; this is the only vindication of the truth of religion that need or can be undertaken. On this view the function of the Philosophy of Religion is simply to gather up the results of the empirical study of religion under a general point of view. Doubtless this philosophical empiricism, as we may roughly designate it, came as an inevitable and in some ways healthy reaction from the airy confidence with which the speculative enterprise, following the *à priori*, deductive method, was undertaken in the previous generation, often with barren though pretentious results. Matthew Arnold, adapting Joubert's sentence on Plato, described the poet Shelley as "a beautiful and ineffectual angel, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain." A variation of this sentence might not inappropriately be applied to a certain type of idealistic speculative thinkers, who also have been apt to beat their wings in the *void* of à priorism, or at least in a thin rarefied atmosphere all too remote from the tough facts of history. The modern spirit has somewhat clipped the wings of the adventurous and presumptuous spirit of speculation which would soar into the empyrean with easy confidence. There is certainly need of a kind of reverent agnosticism to teach us

humility in the presence of the deep mystery of things, and to restrain the tendency to indulge in what William James, in his criticism of "some Hegelisms," characterized as "outrages on the chastity of thought."

Nevertheless, even the purely empirical study of religion proves to us that the religious consciousness itself points to a super-empirical reality as its ground and support, that therefore its essence is not to be understood empirically, that religion in its development strives for an ideal which derives its validity and authority from "beyond the veil of sense"—that is, from "the beyond that is within," the world of spiritual values which transcends the empirical world of space, time, and events, and yet which is immanent within it as constituting its deeper meaning. Without this ground and support religion is nothing more than the baseless fabric of a dream, a beautiful (or unbeautiful) illusion with no foundation in objective reality. The inner dissolving of religion into a mere subjective illusion cannot be concealed by its supposed beneficial effects in practice. It can be beneficial in practice only to the extent that the religious consciousness believes that it has the universe behind it. If the uncomfortable suspicion were to creep into the religious consciousness that it is a mere subjective state of feeling, the result would be to undermine the confidence of religion in itself, and then religion would rapidly lose whatever functional or pragmatic value it might have. The religious man had better be

kept in the dark about the superior knowledge of the savant who has discovered that religion is a subjective state the value of which lies solely in its social efficiency and not in the fact that it is "in tune with the infinite," for the possession of this higher knowledge will be suicidal to that very efficiency. Religion *means to be true* as well as effective, and effective because true. In its own view, at least, it contains a knowledge (as yet imperfect, but true as far as it goes) of supra-sensible realities, a knowledge which is capable of being progressively purified and made more accurate and adequate. Hence the Philosophy of Religion cannot shirk the task, difficult though it undoubtedly is, of furnishing a rational ground for the world view implied in the religious consciousness. And if it cannot discover any such ground, or if it actually discovers, on the contrary, that at the "heart" of things there is a "heartless" indifference to ethical and spiritual values, or even that the universe at its core is hostile to the religious demand, it is obviously its duty to say so, and to place its negative findings frankly before the world. Let the truth be told though the heavens fall. We are driven, we repeat, to this inquiry by the fact that religious experience itself looks beyond itself and points to a supra-subjective reality in sympathy with it, and from which it derives its very life. We cannot but follow up its claims and inquire into their validity or be untrue to the very phenomena we are studying.

1. We have seen that the *first* business of the

Philosophy of Religion is to study the phenomena of religious experience. This department of our subject is sometimes technically described as the *Phenomenology of Religion*. Now, these phenomena may be studied from two points of view: firstly, from the point of view of the inner or subjective experience of the religious consciousness (the *psychological* point of view); secondly, from the standpoint of religious experience as externalized in rites, institutions, events, myths, creeds, theologies (the *historical* point of view). These two points of view cannot be kept absolutely apart, for the subjective and the objective aspects of experience are ever intimately intertwined in the unity of life. We cannot fully understand the inner experience without studying also its embodiments in objective history, neither can we understand the external history without a sympathetic insight into the inner motives and desires which operate within the religious consciousness. For, on the one hand, religious experience is conditioned by and derives much of its content from its social environment—*i.e.*, the traditions, customs, beliefs, which constitute the social heritage of the time and place in which the individual finds himself. This is less true of the mystic than of other types of religious people, but it is largely true of him, too; more so than he himself is often aware of. On the other hand, such traditions, customs, beliefs are themselves vitally rooted in certain psychological motives, even though such motives operate to a large extent in the subconscious mind

rather than in the full daylight of consciousness. But though the subjective experiences and the objective phenomena of religion belong organically together, yet for convenience' sake they may be treated apart, provided we remember that the two methods of treatment are supplementary to each other and that the one cannot take the place of the other. The facts of history are meaningless to us except in so far as we are able to discover *within* us certain feelings, impulses, cravings, beliefs, which supply us with the key to their meaning; while, on the other hand, subjective religious experiences are elusive, inarticulate, individualistic, except in so far as they are embodied in historical forms of worship, institutions, activities, doctrines.

The study of religion as a fact of experience and history brings us face to face with certain problems which the Philosophy of Religion has to seek to solve. It has not only to know the facts, but to understand and explain them. Some of the questions that arise are: What *is* religion? How are we to define its essential nature and function? Where, if anywhere, are we to draw the line between the religious and the secular? How is religion related to other aspects of life and culture more or less akin to it? How, for instance, is it distinguished from, and how is it related to, morality, art, science, philosophy? Here comes in the difficult question of the definition of religion, which one might suppose should logically come at the very threshold of our discussion, for it might well appear that the first requisite of a philosophy

of religion is a definition of its subject-matter, so that from the outset it might safeguard itself against wandering into irrelevancy. But as a matter of fact the logical order is not in this case practicable, for we cannot hope to arrive at anything like an adequate definition of religion until we have patiently studied the phenomena. The essential nature of religion will only reveal itself to us when we have surveyed its psychological and historical development and studied the infinitely varied forms of expression which the religious spirit of man has from time to time assumed. We know already well enough for practical purposes what religion means, so that the question of the exact definition of its nature may be postponed to a later stage. Then there are problems concerning the origin and development of religion. How and why did man, in the course of his evolution from the sub-human plane, come to be religious, and why does he continue to be religious? And by what law or necessity did man advance from the crude beginnings of religion in the life of the primitive savage to the higher and more refined forms of religion? It is obvious to the most superficial student of history that there has been progress, though by no means constant and unbroken progress. Can we discover what laws, principles, factors, have been at work in the process of the evolution of religion?

2. We have also seen that from the study of the phenomena of religion and of its nature, laws, and principles of development, we have to pass on to

the question of the validity and adequacy of the religious view of the world. We have to justify it as a reasonable attitude for reasonable beings, or, if it cannot be justified, to show why it is an indefensible attitude. This problem divides itself into two. First, there is the *epistemological* problem. Is the mind of man competent to pronounce judgment on the nature of reality? Is knowledge of the suprasensible possible? Or is it a contradiction in terms to speak as if human experients could know or experience that which *ex hypothesi* transcends experience? And what is the nature of *religious* knowledge, or that which claims to be such? Is it essentially of the same kind and acquired by essentially the same methods as "secular" knowledge? Or is it something qualitatively different from it and of such a kind as to be able to penetrate to realms that are closed to ordinary knowledge and out of the reach of the ordinary faculties by which knowledge is acquired? Is faith a higher mode of knowing? And can the claim of the religious consciousness to possess a superior intuition of truth be vindicated?

Then, secondly, there is the *ontological* problem. The claims of religion having been examined in the light of the capacity of the human mind, they have to be further examined in the light of the nature of ultimate reality itself. Is the nature of reality such as to justify the religious view of the world, or is that view an error and an illusion? And if the characteristic religious view of the world can in general be maintained, the question arises,

What specific *form* of religious belief is the most adequate expression of the nature of reality? For the religious *Weltanschauung* is by no means everywhere and at all times the same. Religious beliefs, doctrines, creeds, are amazingly varied in character, and cannot without much critical sifting and reconstruction be fused into one consistent system of thought. The beliefs prevalent in most religions seem to be a strange conglomeration of truth and error, of rational faith and irrational superstition. Some religions seem to have arrived at a higher and purer form of truth than others. For instance, probably no educated Western would defend primitive animism as the best interpretation of reality that the mind of man can arrive at. What, then, is the highest form of religious truth that we can reach? Is it, for instance, Theism or Pantheism or Pluralism or Absolute Idealism, or must we accept the view of some Neo-Realists who think of God as gradually emerging out of a space-time world?* Or is there some other construction truer and more adequate than any of these? Whichever view we adopt has to be expounded, and defended in the face of difficulties—*e.g.*, the difficulty involved in the problem of evil. Thus the Philosophy of Religion has its own contribution to make to the discovery and exposition of the most adequate form of religious belief, one that shall at once satisfy human needs and be in harmony with the best scientific and philosophic knowledge that we possess. We do not mean to

* See S. Alexander, *Space, Time, and Deity* (1920).

suggest that religion ever was or can be the mere product of philosophic thought. It is rather the more or less spontaneous expression of the deep cravings and desires of our whole nature. In the religious consciousness all sides of the whole personality participate, and not the reason alone. But the Philosophy of Religion can render an important service to religion by criticizing and refining religious beliefs, by separating the essential from the accidental and secondary elements of faith, by disentangling what is true and of permanent value from all admixture of superstition and crude fanaticism, and by constructively articulating the true view of God, man, and the universe as far as this lies in our power. This critical and constructive thinking out of a whole system of truth may be a mere ideal, by no means immediately attainable. It may be a kind of flying goal ever receding into the distance as we pursue it. But it does seem to be at least the ideal that should control all our thinking in this field of inquiry, even though our constructive efforts may be at best provisional and tentative. The fact that the ideal is not immediately and fully realizable should not paralyze our thinking, but should stimulate a sustained and patient search for truth, inasmuch as the diligent and sincere search for truth brings its own reward, even though the whole truth can only be approximately and progressively reached.

In this final constructive effort the Philosophy of Religion merges in philosophy in general. For the truth of religion cannot be essentially different

from truth as the object of philosophical inquiry generally. This is what Hegel really meant when he identified, as to their real *content*, the *Vorstellungen* (ideas, more or less pictorial) of religion with the *Begriffe* (pure intellectual notions) of philosophy, the difference between them being a difference of form rather than of content. Certainly truth is one and indivisible, and we cannot philosophise about it in compartments. The beliefs implied in religious experience can only be valid when they are in substance consistent with the postulates on which experience as a whole rests, for experience, too, like truth, is ultimately one and indivisible and cannot be cut in two with a hatchet. The facts and truths implied in man's secular experience and the facts and truths of his religious experience must be at bottom in complete harmony with each other, otherwise experience—and the universe which it reflects—would be like unto a house divided against itself, which cannot stand. For instance, if materialism is true in general philosophy, it cannot be false in the philosophy of religion. Hence there can be no real line of demarcation between the Philosophy of Religion and Philosophy in general, in their ultimate interpretation and thought-construction, though they may differ in their way of approach and in the preliminary stages of their work. And nearly all the great philosophical systems have culminated in some kind of a philosophy of religion. On these and other grounds some thinkers would go so far as to deny that there is any such thing as a philosophy

of religion as a separate discipline, distinct from philosophy in general.* But in view of the specialized interest of the philosopher of religion in that aspect of experience which is distinctively religious, and the fact that he approaches the general problems of philosophy through that special avenue, it is convenient to retain the distinction, even though in the end the problems of both the special and the general study are the same, so that the special study cannot be regarded as something rigidly departmental.

Further, it might appear as if there can be no real distinction between the Philosophy of Religion and Theology—*i.e.*, Systematic or Doctrinal Theology—for each aims at a systematic interpretation of truth. In practice, however, there is a sufficiently clear distinction between them. Theology is a system of doctrines developed on the basis of a definite historic religion—say Brahmanism or Mohammedanism or Christianity—or even on the still narrower basis of one particular school or denomination within that particular religion, as of the Roman Catholic Church, the Calvinistic school, or the Unitarian school within Christianity. But the Philosophy of Religion is not tied to a particular religion or sect, but takes for its province religion as such, religion as a universal phenomenon in human experience. It gathers its data from all quarters and includes within its sweep the whole process of religious evolution from the

* See, *e.g.*, R. G. Collingwood's *Religion and Philosophy* (1916), pp. 15 *f.*

lowest stages of savage life to the most advanced levels of culture. It studies the religious consciousness in general, and not any particular form of it taken in isolation from all the others or arbitrarily selected as the true type or norm. Its attitude is thus far removed from that of the Rev. Mr. Thwackum in Fielding's *Tom Jones* (Book III., chap. iii.), as represented in the words, "When I mention religion, I mean the Christian religion; and not only the Christian religion, but the Protestant religion; and not only the Protestant religion, but the Church of England." Some such narrowing of the field at the very outset may be necessary in Theology, but the Philosophy of Religion recognizes no such limitation. It may ultimately lead up to an ideal or absolute religion and a rejection of all other forms of religion as inadequate. But such can only be the goal of its inquiries and not its datum or presupposition.

Thus the Philosophy of Religion occupies an intermediary position between Philosophy in general on the one hand and Theology on the other. Just as Philosophy in general is a critical interpretation of experience as a whole, whereas the Philosophy of Religion is a more intensive study of *religious* experience as such, so Theology finds its data in a still mor special aspect of experience—to wit, in some particular *form* of religious experience (*e.g.*, Christian experience) regarded from the start as the perfect or ideal form. Yet here again the distinction is relative, not absolute. For Christian experience is, after

all, organic to the whole religious experience of the race (including the non-Christian), as that in turn is organic to the total body of human experience (including its "secular" aspects). And as Theology enlarges its outlook it tends to broaden out in the direction of a Philosophy of Religion, though it need not wholly lose its identity in it. It may be added that the Philosophy of Religion, too, on its side, will gain in vitality and wealth of content if, while not surrendering its impartiality, it remains in sympathetic communication with the Theology of some definite historic religion; for if it assumes a purely detached attitude its construction may become too academic and remote from life, a mere "unearthly ballet of bloodless categories," as Bradley said in another connection, or a kind of artificial product of one man's brain, like Comte's Religion of Humanity, a religion which never was on sea or land and which lacked the spontaneous creative impulse of a real live religious movement grounded in history. Yet we admit that the Philosophy of Religion must, in comparison at any rate with Theology, maintain a free and detached attitude, inasmuch as Theology is frequently tied down *ab initio* to some external authority such as the Bible, the Church, or dogma (hence Doctrinal Theology is often called "Dogmatics," a word of ill omen and ill savour as we venture to think), while the Philosophy of Religion is in principle free from bondage to any authority except the authority of truth itself. And we would agree with Dr. Galloway that "in the end, the

ground of authority"—for Theology as well as for the Philosophy of Religion—"must be the character of the spiritual experience itself," rather than anything external to it.* We believe that it is this alleged authority of dogma which stands in the way of a better understanding between the Philosophy of Religion and Theology. The dogmatic spirit and method is certainly alien to the genius of the former.

Even the vast programme we have roughly outlined in this chapter is not exhaustive. But it is more than we shall be able to do justice to within the limits of this book. It may serve to map out the ground that we shall attempt to traverse.

* George Galloway *The Philosophy of Religion* (1914), p. 50.

Chapter II — *Origin of Religion in the Light of Anthropology*

ONE of the main tasks of the Philosophy of Religion is to explain the nature and function of religion. It has to show what religion *is*, and what religion *does* or what purpose it fulfils in the life of the individual and of society. But the nature and function of religion can only be explained after a careful investigation has been made into the problem of its historical and psychological *origin* and *development*. If we can learn from the anthropologist, the psychologist, and the historian how and why man came to be a religious being, as well as how and why religion developed from its crude beginnings to its highest forms, then we are on the high-road to a solution of the problems as to what religion essentially is and what purpose it answers in human life. First, then, let us take up the question of the origin of religion.

It is necessary, however, to warn the reader at the outset that the question of origins is relatively independent of the question of values. If religion can be traced back to lowly origins, that should not in itself be regarded as prejudicial to its real value in the higher stages of its development, or to its relative value even at the lower stages, any more than the fact that science, morality, and art have sprung from most crude and unpromising beginnings should discredit the value of the final results

or of the painful and often bungling efforts which have contributed to those results. If we are at all justified in judging origin and fulfilment the one in the light of the other, it seems more rational to maintain that the final achievement enhances the worth of the crude beginnings than to say that the crudeness of the beginnings depreciates the value of the result. And yet, although the question of origin does not prejudge the question of ultimate worth, an inquiry into the question how man first came to be religious will probably help us considerably in our search for the key to the essential meaning of religion and its place in human life.

I.

The question of the origin of religion was not scientifically studied until modern times. Before we come to consider some modern theories it may be well to refer briefly to two views which were once widely prevalent, but which are now obsolete or obsolescent.

1. The first is the view that traced religion back to a primitive or a special Divine Revelation. This view has held a prominent place in Jewish, Christian, and Mohammedan theologies. It has usually taken the form of a belief in a primeval monotheism of divine origin, from which polytheism in its many forms is a later relapse. In its usual forms the doctrine of revelation has explained the origin of religion in far too intellectual and mechanical a fashion, as if religion began with the impartation to man of a set of ideas, ready-made and finished

ideas poured into a mind conceived as a kind of empty vessel. This is a crudely unpsychological view. It makes revelation to be purely an act of God, and does not help us to understand how it was conditioned by the nature and experience of man, how it was psychologically mediated. The criticism of the doctrine of primitive revelation made by Schelling is pertinent, to the effect that if religion were to be derived from an historical communication from God, men would have to be conceived as without religion before that communication, and that if we admit an original atheism of human consciousness, it would remain inconceivable how such a consciousness could have received a revelation from God. The problem would still remain unsolved, if not insoluble, How could a mere external revelation get religion into a mind which had no religious constitution or content? The category of revelation may be ultimately necessary in a statement of the objective ground of the validity of religious beliefs and in order to safeguard the place of the divine initiative in the religious life of man; but it must be a continuous and progressive revelation adapting itself to, and at any given period conditioned by, the measure of human receptivity, and not a revelation external, arbitrarily limited as to its recipients, more or less complete as to its content; moreover, it must be a revelation of God in terms of the whole life of man and not in terms of mere intellectual knowledge or ideas, conveyed to the mind of man from above. The theory of evolution has led us

to conceive of primitive man as utterly incapable of receiving and retaining the highly developed ideas which primitive revelation was supposed to communicate to him.

2. The other view is that of the so-called English Deists of the eighteenth century. These thinkers rejected the idea of revelation and found the origin of religion in human reason. The fundamental truths of religion, such as the being of God, the immortality of the soul, the authority of the moral law, are truths of reason which can be established with the certainty of mathematical truths and which constitute the natural religion which is the common element in all the varied religions of the world. This religion of reason is natural to man and therefore known to him from the beginning. But through the cunning devices of the priests, whose one object was to exploit the fears and credulity of the masses in order to get them under their control, elaborate superstitious beliefs and ritual practices came everywhere to take the place of the simple religion of reason. Thus religion has a twofold origin—viz., reason as the source of pure natural religion, and wilful deceit on the part of priests as the source of all the actual historical religions. The purest form of religion is thus the religion of primitive man, before the "priestcraft" had commenced its corrupting work. Natural religion existed from the first as a perfected thing, and all additions are not only unnecessary, but false and mischievous. This theory of the English Deists, first propounded by Lord Herbert

of Cherbury* and John Toland,† was adopted by a group of French thinkers during the latter part of the eighteenth century—*e.g.*, La Mettrie, D'Alembert, Voltaire—and was at one time widely current among opponents of the prevalent religion. It is now quite obsolete. It has several very serious and obvious defects. (*a*) It exaggerates the place of reason as the originating source of religion, and ignores that emotional and intuitional illumination which is such a fruitful source of religious ideas and experience. (*b*) It reveals a lack of the historic sense and ignores the principle of historical development which is at work in religion as in all other departments of life. It attributes to primitive man mature ideas which it took untold ages for man to be able to grasp and appreciate. This fault it shares with the theory of primitive revelation mentioned above. (*c*) Most absurd of all is the idea that all the actual religions of history are simply calculating hypocrisies invented by priests in a spirit of selfish greed for power. Doubtless priests have frequently exploited the religious impulses of men to serve their own ends, but they could only exploit what already existed independently of them. The priest avails himself of what is already in existence. His function is not to originate but to conserve,‡ while the real creators

* *De Religione Gentilium*, published posthumously in 1663.

† *Christianity not Mysterious* (1696).

‡ *Cf.* M. Jastrow, *The Study of Religion* (1901), pp. 19, 180.

are the prophets and apostles, who are little concerned with the outward rites and ceremonies of religion. Certainly none of the greater historical religions owed their origin to a priest, but more usually to a layman. This shallow and cynical theory makes religion a matter of deliberate invention rather than a matter of spontaneous growth with its roots in the deep foundations of man's nature. It is utterly untenable and has now no supporters.

These older and pre-scientific views we may now put on one side and proceed to discuss some of the more important modern theories of the origin of religion. There are two ways in which the question may be approached—the way of the anthropologist and the way of the psychologist. The former is concerned with the historic, or rather prehistoric, origin of religion. How did religion first appear in time and place? In what way did the religious nature of man first express itself? What was the most rudimentary form of religion, from which all other forms may be said to have developed? But the problem of the latter is, What is its source in man's spiritual nature, not at the beginning only, but everywhere and always? What are the constant factors in the inner life of man which, in interplay with the environment, generate the attitude which we call religious? What are the impulses, promptings, motives, felt needs, which lead him to apprehend the supernatural and to adjust his life to it? What is there in his mental make-up that accounts for the fact

that wherever man is found he has some form or other of religion? These two sets of questions are really inseparable. The anthropologist needs the help of psychology to enable him to solve his problem, and the psychologist likewise needs the help of anthropology. The anthropologist especially needs to have an insight into the psychology of the primitive mind before he can hope to reconstruct the religion of the primitive man. In fact, we may say that his task is primarily psychological. For there are no records of the oldest forms of religion, either in written documents or in trustworthy traditions. He cannot, therefore, go back in history to the beginnings and there make a study of man in the process of becoming religious, for at the very dawn of history man is already fully religious. But by a sympathetic study of the mind and ways of modern savages and of children, and by constructive imagination on the basis of such study, the anthropologist may rebuild for us the religion of the primitive man. His reconstruction must necessarily be purely hypothetical. Even though scientific investigation has placed at our disposal a great wealth of material with regard to the religion of the savage, it must remain largely a matter of conjecture which, if any, of these low forms of religion can be regarded as the original or parent form, or as the nearest approximation to it. And the truth of the conjecture will largely depend on the measure of psychological insight which is behind it. Hence our main interest will be in the question, What

are the roots of religion in man's inner nature? Anthropology and history will subserve the psychological interest. This means that the most fruitful method of discovering the essence of religion is what Hoffding has called the psychological-genetic method. Bearing these considerations in mind, let us turn first to some modern *anthropological* theories, and then secondly to some more definitely *psychological* views. Out of the multitude of theories we shall only be able to discuss a few of the more typical and important.

II.

The Animistic Theory of E. B. Tylor.—This may be said to be the first theory of the origin of religion that was backed up by a thoroughly scientific study of the mind and habits of the savage. It first appeared in Tylor's monumental volumes, *Primitive Culture* (first edition 1871, third edition 1891), where it is shown that at a certain stage of culture men everywhere attribute a kind of soul to the phenomena of Nature—*e.g.*, to trees, brooks, mountains, clouds, stones, stars. Primitive man regarded all he saw as possessing a life like unto his own. He instinctively projected his own experience into the objects around him, making unconscious use of the only principle that was available to him—viz., the principle of analogy. The movements of things around him he accounted for on the analogy of his own movements, which he knew by immediate experience were due to the activity of his spirit or will. To

early man, as to the savage to-day, all Nature was alive, filled with innumerable spirits. According to Tylor, it was on the basis of this animistic view of the world that religion arose. Religion had its origin in the attempt of man to establish a relationship between him and certain of the spirits with which the world around him was peopled, and this would lead him to seek to propitiate the powerful spirits and to exorcise the evil ones.

Tylor's anthropological researches and theory have deeply influenced the direction taken by the study of religion. It is now generally recognized that the animistic belief is universal at a certain level of culture. Yet as an account of the origin of religion it cannot be regarded as satisfactory. (1) Animism is not rudimentary religion, as it is sometimes loosely called, but a kind of rudimentary philosophy; "the most elementary of human philosophies," Höffding calls it.* Not all the spirits which animate the objects of Nature are worshipped or evoke religious emotion and action. Hence it is still necessary to find a psychological motive to explain why man should seek to establish a relation with some spirits and not with others. The worshipper must see in the object of his reverence something to stir up his emotions profoundly, something to evoke his

* Tylor himself is not guilty of the looseness referred to. With him animism is not a religion, but the basis of religion, a kind of philosophy of religion. "Animism is, in fact, the groundwork of the Philosophy of Religion, from that of savages up to that of civilized men" (*Primitive Culture* (3rd edition), vol. i., p. 426).

special interest. Worship implies selection, and for the selection a motive must be found. Thus it is psychology that holds the key to the problem. Religion means man's response in some way to the supernatural, or to what he conceives as having in some way control over his destiny. But the supernatural is no part of animism pure and simple, which ascribes human, but not superhuman, powers to non-human beings. As Dr. Jevons points out, the never-resting flow of the stream, for instance, was just as familiar and just as "natural" to primitive man as to us; there was nothing supernatural or mysterious about the movement of the stream, even though it was conceived like all else as due to a living spirit; it was due to a will which, being exactly like his own, had nothing unusual about it. Objects habitually present without emotional accompaniments would not become objects of religious awe, reverence, or worship. Thus we cannot say that religion arose out of animism. We can only say that the religion of early man was, like the whole of his life, dominated by animism. (2) But even as a kind of philosophy animism is not strictly primitive. It involves the notion of a soul, which could only have been achieved through considerable reflection extended over a long period of time. The notion of a soul as a definite thing is a fairly advanced concept which must have been beyond the mental reach of primitive man Nor did he have to wait until he could attribute a separate spirit to each object of Nature before he could have a religion. And so authorities have

come to recognize what is called a pre-animistic stage of religion.

The Ghost-Theory of Herbert Spencer.—Brief reference may be made to Spencer's well-known theory which finds the origin of religion in the worship of ancestors appearing in the form of ghosts. Some awe of the ghosts of the departed prevails widely among savages, and as far back as we can go men are seen offering sacrifices to the spirits of their ancestors. This Herbert Spencer believed to be the most primitive form of religion, the one which accounts for and developed into the other forms. The fear of the dead who had passed beyond the control of the living was the motive which led to the observance of religious rites. Animism is not original but derivative, being a generalized form of the belief in the spirits of dead ancestors reappearing as ghosts and choosing certain objects in Nature as their dwelling-place. In answer to this view it must be said that it is rather ghost-worship that is derivative, being a specialized form of spirit-worship in general. Spencer's theory errs on the side of over-simplicity. The deification of ancestors is far too narrow a basis on which to rear the structure of religion. "Religion is too complex a phenomenon to be accounted for by the growth and spread of a single custom. Worship, of however primitive a character, is not the expression of a single thought or a single emotion, but the product of thoughts so complex, so powerful, as to force an expression in the same way in which a river, swollen by

streams coming down the mountains from various directions, overflows its banks."* Dr. Jevons expresses his view in unqualified terms thus: "It never happens that the spirits of the dead are conceived to be gods. Man is dependent on the gods, but the spirits of his dead ancestors are dependent on him. . . . The worshipper's pride is that *his* ancestor was a god and no mere mortal. . . . The fact is that ancestors known to be human were not worshipped as gods, and that ancestors worshipped as gods were not believed to be human."† This may be overstating the case, but this at least may safely be said, that not all savages who are familiar with the idea of ancestral spirits make these spirits objects of worship (*e.g.*, the natives of Central Australia, a most primitive type of people, believe in the reappearance of the spirits of ancestors, but do not worship them). We do not find the worship of ghosts to be nearly as prevalent among the lower peoples as Spencer imagined, and it certainly cannot be maintained that ancestor-worship is more primitive in character than the worship of the spirits of natural objects.

Totemism as the Simplest and Most Primitive Religion.—Some authorities have fastened on totemism as the most ancient and primitive form of religion. Totemism is such an extraordinarily intricate phenomenon that we cannot here describe it in its baffling complexity. A totem is a species

* M. Jastrow, *The Study of Religion* (1901), p. 185.

† F. B. Jevons, *An Introduction to the History of Religion* (1896), pp. 196 *f.*

of animal or plant, or more rarely a class of inanimate objects, to which a social group (a clan) stands in an intimate and very special relation of friendship or kinship—frequently it is thought of as the ancestor of the clan—and which provides that social group with its name. The totem is not exactly a god, but a cognate being and one to be respected. It must not be used for common purposes, nor must it be slain or eaten except in some solemn and sacramental way. It is always the species and never an individual animal or plant that is regarded as a totem. The totemistic theory of the origin of worship had once much vogue, owing to its brilliant and suggestive advocacy by W. Robertson Smith in his *Religion of the Semites* (1885), whose position was further developed by F. B Jevons in his *Introduction to the History of Religion* (1896). Smith's ingenious theory, in which he found in totemism the origin of the whole sacrificial system, has influenced in a most fertile way the scientific study of religion, but it cannot now be regarded as adequate to the facts. Jevons maintains that totemism is "the most primitive form of society" (p. 99), that it "is or has been worldwide" (p. 117), that polytheism is a relapse from it (p. 395). He does not, indeed, claim that it is absolutely the earliest stage of religion, for he speaks of a "pre-totemistic stage," but says that "the nature of religious belief" in that stage is "entirely matter of conjecture" (p. 413). "Animals were the first of the external objects that thus came to be worshipped, and totemism

was the first form of that worship," and "for a long period man continued to have only one object of worship—namely, the totem or tribal god" (p. 411). "So far belief in this stage may be termed monotheism" (p. 413), but the term "monolatry" would probably convey Jevons's meaning more accurately than monotheism.

In criticism of this theory it must be said that the most recent researches have not sustained the view that every religion has passed through the totemistic stage. It cannot be denied that totemism is very ancient, but its universality is very far from being proved. There are many peoples of very low culture among whom it is unknown, or at least unrecognizable. We fail to discern it, for instance, among the Veddas of Ceylon, though they are divided into clans, or among the Andaman Islanders, or among the low Brazilian tribes. Other tribes (as among the Central Australians) have totems which yet are not worshipped and which are in no sense deities. Indeed, totemism cannot accurately be called a religion at all, though it is on the border-line of religion. It is a matter of social or tribal organization rather than the typical form of primitive religion. Dr. Jevons has somewhat modified his position in more recent writings.

A new form has recently been given to this theory by the French sociological school, of which Emile Durkheim is the most distinguished representative.* Durkheim regards totemism as the

* See esp. Durkheim's *Les Formes Elémentaires de la Vie Religieuse* (Paris, 1912; Eng. Trans. 1915).

most simple and primitive religion which it is possible to find. Though he insists that the importance of totemism is absolutely independent of whether it was ever universal or not, yet it is practically assumed as the earliest form of society and of religion everywhere. The substratum of all religious belief lies in the idea of a mysterious impersonal force controlling life, and this sense of force is derived from the authority of society over the individual. It is this sense of the power of the social group over his life that becomes to man the consciousness of a mysterious power in the world The totem is the visible emblem of this power; but the reality behind the totem, which the totem symbolizes, is the might of tribal custom, emotion, and thought, which seems like an actually existing force weighing upon each individual and dominating his life. His real god is society; the power he really worships is the power of society. Durkheim's interest in totemism is determined by his sociological theory of religion as essentially and wholly a social phenomenon. The further discussion of it cannot be undertaken here. We can only repeat that there are large parts of the world in which no traces of totemism have been found, and that, strictly speaking, totemism is not a religion at all. "Although regarded with reverence and looked to for help, the totem is never, where totemism is not decadent, prayed to as a god or a person with powers which we call supernatural."* But Durkheim is probably right in

* E. S. Hartland, art. on *Totemism* in Hastings' *Enc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. xii. (1921), pp. 406 *f.*

seeking to trace back religion to something more primitive than the animistic belief in nature-spirits conceived as personal or in the ghosts of ancestors —viz., to a vague but emotionally powerful sense of some mysterious impersonal force. What this means will be shown in the next paragraph.

III.

Pre-Animistic Religion: The Conception of Mana.—Recent anthropology tends more and more to find the origin of religion—in common with magic (see the next section)—in a pre-animistic period or stage characterised by a sense of awe in the presence of a diffused, indefinable, mysterious power or powers not regarded as personal. This power is designated by the Melanesian term *mana*, which is common to a large group of languages, and corresponds to what the Algonquin tribes of North America call *manitou*, the Iroquoian tribes *orenda*, and the Sioux *wakonda*. The idea represented in these words is found in widely separated regions, among widely different races, and in the most diverse cultures, but we may take the Melanesian word *mana* (first introduced into our vocabulary by Bishop Codrington in his book *The Melanesians*, 1891) as the best available term to express it. Naturally in the mind of the savage it is, though potent, yet vague and undefined, having strong emotional though weak conceptual value, and in the very attempt to crystallise it into a clear concept for our own sakes we are in danger of losing touch with the unsophisticated mentality

of the savage. *Mana* is an all-pervading supersensual power or influence that operates in unexpected ways or appears in natural objects of striking character. It is a mysterious or magical—as distinguished from natural—quality or potency hovering between the personal and the impersonal, but more psychical than physical in character, permeating all things, but often concentrated in individual persons or things, an indefinite reservoir of energy in the universe, on which man can draw for good or ill. It is this incalculable power that manifests itself in extraordinary things and persons and unexpected events. "All conspicuous success is a proof that a man has *mana*. . . . A man's power, though political or social in character, is his *mana*. . . . If a man has been successful in fighting, it has not been his natural strength of arm, quickness of eye, or readiness of resource that has won success; he has certainly got the *mana* of a spirit or of a deceased warrior to empower him, conveyed in an amulet or a stone around his neck, or a tuft of leaves in his belt . . . or in the form of words with which he brings supernatural assistance to his side. . . . A canoe will not be swift unless *mana* be brought to bear upon it, a wind will not catch many fish, nor an arrow inflict a mortal wound" (Codrington). The totem animal has power or cunning and is sacred because it has *mana*, and men eat the totem animal sacramentally in order to obtain *mana* (here is the element of truth in Durkheim's theory above referred to). Innumerable other instances can be found in recent

books by sociologists and anthropologists.* It should be borne in mind that the word has a strong emotional atmosphere, that it suggests, not only an objective power, but the emotional reactions of awe and wonder which are produced by it.

Here, then, we seem to have the common root of magic and religion. Pre-animistic religion is the sense of awe, mystery, and wonder in the presence of this supernatural power, diffused, yet capable of immense concentration. Here is an attitude of mind which supplies religion with its raw material. It is obviously more primitive in character than animism, and may be assumed to be chronologically prior to it. It "may provide the basis on which an animistic doctrine is subsequently constructed. . . . Of such powers [towards which awe is felt] spirits constitute but a single class among many; though, being powers in their own right, they furnish a type to which the rest may become assimilated in the long run" (Marett, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2). Dr. Marett further suggests that the two categories *mana* and *tabu*, taken together, give the clue to rudimentary pre-animistic religion. "Science, then, may adopt *mana* as a general category to designate the positive aspect of the supernatural, or whatever we are to call that order of miraculous happenings which, for the concrete experience, if not usually for the

* For example, R. R. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion* (2nd ed., 1914), pp. 1-28, 98-121 *et passim*; E. S. Hartland, *Ritual and Belief* (1914), pp. 26-66; E. Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (E. Tr. 1912), pp. 188 *ff.*

abstract thought of the savage, is marked off perceptibly from the order of ordinary happenings. *Tabu*, on the other hand, may serve to designate its negative aspect. That is to say, negatively, the supernatural is *tabu*, not to be lightly approached, because, positively, it is *mana*, instinct with power above the ordinary" (pp. 99-100). Religion in its origin is thus seen to be a sense of awe and mystery in the presence of the indefinable and incalculable power—supraphysical power—manifested in things, persons, and events, together with the attendant effort on man's part to adjust himself negatively and positively to that power, with a view to satisfying certain felt needs of his life. We see that, as we anticipated, the answer of anthropology to the question of the origin of religion involves psychology—*i.e.*, it takes into account, as more significant than mere outward facts and customs, the primitive mentality, the inward emotions and reactions which the phenomena of Nature elicited.

Magic and Religion.—We have said that religion and magic have a common root. This position has now to be more fully stated. The question of the relation between these two attitudes or types of behaviour has often been discussed by anthropologists, and has an important bearing on the problem of the origin and nature of religion. Have we sufficient grounds for assigning logical or chronological priority to the one rather than to the other? If so, to which of the two does priority belong? Can we trace a genetic relation between them? Did the one spring from the other, either

by way of development or else by way of degradation or relapse? Or did they have independent origins? At least three positions may be held in reference to these questions.

(1) It may be maintained that religion was prior to magic, or, in the words of Dr. Jevons, "that belief in the supernatural [=religion] was prior to the belief in magic, and that the latter whenever it sprang up was a degradation or a relapse in the evolution of religion."* Here Jevons seems guilty of at least a formal inconsistency, for earlier in the same sentence he says that "religion and magic had different origins, and were always essentially distinct from one another" (the radical difference and hostility between them is frequently emphasized in his book). But if two things have different origins and are always essentially distinct from one another, can the one be a degradation or relapse in the evolution of the other? This doctrine of relapse, implying that man started with a relatively pure form of religion, recurs in other contexts in Jevons's book (*cf.* our reference above to his view of polytheism as a relapse from a kind of monotheism). It has, however, so far as we are aware, few, if any, supporters among modern anthropologists,† nor is it antecedently probable. While it is true to say with Jevons, and as Dean Inge has

* F. B. Jevons, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

† *Cf.*, however, Andrew Lang's theory of degeneracy from a kind of primitive theism. See his *Making of Religion* (1898; 2nd ed., 1900).

more recently been reminding us, that evolution does not mean necessary and inevitable progress, yet the presumption is that man's religion was at first extremely crude, and was even indistinguishable from magic.

(2) It may be held that magic was prior to religion, and that the latter evolved in some way out of the former. This view may take the form that primitive magic was the germ out of which religion in course of time developed. Here, however, we must confine ourselves to Frazer's view, according to which the contribution of magic to the genesis of religion was negative rather than positive. Sir James Frazer's famous theory may be thus briefly summarized.* "In the evolution of thought, magic, as representing a lower intellectual stratum, has probably everywhere preceded religion." Magic is due to a misapplication of the laws of the association of ideas, especially the laws of association by similarity and by contiguity in space and time. But "a tardy recognition of the inherent falsehood and barrenness of magic set the more thoughtful part of mankind to cast about for a truer theory of Nature and a more fruitful method of turning her resources to account." Thus man's bitter experience of the failure of magic drove him to a different and better method of trafficking with the unseen, and led him to address himself to those mighty beings who were

* Frazer's *Golden Bough*, "The Magic Art," vol. i., esp. pp. 220-243 (3rd ed., 1911). See also his one vol. edition (abridged; 1923).

like himself, but far stronger—the gods—"humbly confessing his dependence on their invisible power, and beseeching them of their mercy to furnish him with all good things." Thus "the age of magic" gradually gave place to "the age of religion," because man came to realize that in magic he was simply pulling at strings to which nothing was attached. Magic and religion are mutually irreconcilable attitudes; like oil and water, they will not mix. Inasmuch as there is in principle a fundamental opposition between them, magic cannot contribute anything positive to religion; its relation must be a negative one, as sketched above. In a word, man's despair of magic is the genesis of religion.

Frazer's theory has proved most suggestive and provocative of thought and discussion. But though doubtless it contains elements of truth, it cannot be accepted in the sharp antithetical way in which he has presented it. It is far too intellectualistic a view of the origin of religion. It seems to represent early man (of the more "sagacious" type) as almost a full-blown arm-chair philosopher in search of a working theory of life and the world, and ignores the spontaneous emotional response to environment which played a much greater part in the life of primitive man than reflective thought did. And even as an intellectualistic account it is based too obviously on the now obsolete associationism of last century. Further, the antithesis between religion and magic is too sharp and uncompromising. Doubtless

these two attitudes, in their *ultimate* tendency and history, are most clearly distinguishable. But to attribute to the early savage, at the very birth of religion, a clear idea of the difference, which only the long course of history made manifest and which only our own superior analytic powers enable us to characterize, is to be guilty of anachronism. Marett is much nearer the mark when he asserts that "magic and religion are differentiated out from a common plasm of crude beliefs about the awful and the occult," and that "supernaturalism provides a raw material common to both," and Hartland when he declares that, "in the lowest societies of which we have evidence, practices usually regarded as magical are indistinguishable from those regarded as religious," and that their "mutual hostility, where it exists, is, in truth, the result of a later development."* Frazer's analytic thinking discovers in the undifferentiated protoplasm of early credulity the disparity between magic and religion which only gradually became manifest. As a matter of fact, we do find the two methods—the magical and the religious—which, according to Frazer, are like oil and water, actually intermingling in the life of communities in all periods and places, not in the form of a mere "mixture," but with a certain amount of inward unity. Finally, the theory only offers a negative explanation of the genesis of religion—the failure

* See Marett, *Threshold of Religion* (2nd ed., 1914), pp. xi., 30; and E. S. Hartland, *Ritual and Belief* (1914), pp. 74 *f.*

of magic. A positive motive for religion still needs to be found.

(3) It may be maintained that magic and religion had a common root in man's experience of the mysterious forces of the world, but that in the course of human evolution they revealed their mutual incompatibility even to the extent of active hostility, but paradoxically also revealed their common origin in the ease with which they often coalesced in practice. This, as already indicated, is the view we take. It is true that to us, looking back from our exalted position, and with our developed capacity for drawing clear distinctions, the difference between magic and religion is very marked and important. The attitude of religion (as Frazer pointed out) is one of humility and submission in the presence of superior powers, while that of magic is that of haughty self-sufficiency and arrogance. Both are concerned with the mysterious, wonder-working powers of the universe, but magic would exploit them by the way of compulsion, religion would win their help by means of prayer, propitiation, persuasion. The powers which the magicians would control are, in the main, impersonal, anonymous, non-moral; religion tends to conceive of the ultimate forces of the universe as personal beings endowed with free will, beings whose goodwill must be won by supplication and sacrifice and by an attitude of humility and reverence. Religion is eminently social; it supplies the bond of unity for the clan or tribe. Magic tends to be individualistic, non-

social or even anti-social, and has recourse to secrecy. Or, as Durkheim strikingly puts it, "*there is no Church of magic*. . . . The magician has a clientele and not a Church. . . . Religion, on the other hand, is inseparable from the idea of a Church."* These distinctions are true of these two attitudes in their ultimate tendency and result. But to the low savage in his darkness of mind these distinctions have not yet emerged, and it is possible that to him religion and magic are indistinguishable and psychologically continuous. We may, then, think of religion and magic as issuing out of common conditions, being the results of man's more or less conscious experiments with the unseen powers in his keen struggle for existence, and of his endeavour to utilize the mysterious potency around him which the Melanesian calls *mana* to help him in the battle of life. He thinks he finds some kind of *mana* everywhere around him. He may use *mana* as a compelling power to bring about the results he desires; or he may seek, by sacrifices and prayer, to placate the divine powers who possess *mana* in an exceptional degree. But in their earliest forms these two ways of getting and using *mana* may be as difficult to discriminate as the simplest types of vegetable and animal life. The conclusion we come to, then, is that while religion and magic are potentially or implicitly distinct from the first, and differ profoundly in principle and method (so that the absence of magical ideas and

* E. Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (E. Tr.), pp. 44 *f*.

practices in a religion is so far a proof of its purity and exalted character as a religion), yet they have a common root in primitive man's emotional reaction to his environment and his random experiments with the unseen forces of the universe in his struggle for existence.

The above brief study of the origin of religion in the light of anthropological research ought to help us when we come to consider the nature and function of religion, including its meaning for us to-day. For we are psychologically as well as physically continuous with primitive man, far though we have travelled away from him. The savage's instinctive tendencies were not simply lived through and then left behind by him as he became civilized. They have been sublimated, but not left behind. Man in his onward march has ever directed to new values, adjusted to new situations, his primary impulses and emotions, but he has never grown clean out of them as a child grows out of his swaddling clothes. The primitive man still lives in us all. On the other hand, this does not mean that there has been no real development, or that the religion of the civilized man is a mere vestige of savage crudity. There has been development as well as continuity, a development implying continuity as a condition of its possibility. The historic development of religion will be our theme in a later chapter.

Chapter III *The Psychical Origin and Development of Religion*

WE have now to approach the question of the origin of religion more definitely from the psychological point of view. What are the factors in man's inner life which account for his being religious? What is there in his spiritual constitution that induced him in the beginning to seek satisfaction in religion and caused him to continue to be religious throughout the untold ages? And what are the psychical factors that account for the *development* of religion from its crude beginnings to what we regard as its highest levels? It is seen that we do not now draw a sharp line between the problem of origin and the problem of development. Origin and development belong together; they are psychologically continuous. There is a genetic relation between the earliest and latest stages of religion. Underlying the whole process of religious evolution is the unity of the religious consciousness of mankind. There is a psychological identity in all religious experience, notwithstanding the infinite variety of its manifestations. There is true development, but it is development within the unity and continuity of the whole process. What, then, in the nature of man constitutes him a religious being? Where in his inner life are we to find the springs of religion?

I.

Some answers to this question that have been given are obviously unsatisfactory from a strictly scientific point of view, however justifiable they may be in a loose, popular sense. One of these is the common statement that man has a *religious instinct*. To say that man is religious because he has a religious instinct is a cheap and facile way of solving—or of shirking—the psychological problem of the origin of religion. It is perilously easy to multiply indefinitely the number of the instincts in order to account for certain widespread characteristics of human behaviour. In such cases what is assumed is often the very thing that demands explanation. To say that man acts in such and such a way because he is endowed with an innate tendency to do so amounts to little more than the obvious tautology that it is so because it is so. Adapting William of Occam's famous maxim, *essentia non multiplicanda sunt præter necessitatem*, we would say that instincts should not be indefinitely and unnecessarily multiplied. It is true that man is endowed with a number of basal instincts, the raw material of personality, but they are few in number and simple in character. They constitute the original outfit with which every man is equipped and which he has in common with other animals. The word "instinct" has come to mean for psychologists something very definite and simple—viz., the inborn, untaught tendency to react in a specific way to a certain kind of object

or situation, independently of prior experience. But religion is not a simple, specific reaction to a simple, specific kind of impression. It is rather "a very complex and diversified product of the co-operation of several instincts, which bring forth very heterogeneous manifestations."* When we find in an excellent introduction to the scientific study of religion the statement that "the religious instinct is, so far as the evidence goes, innate in man," and that "the definite assumption of a religious instinct in man forms part of almost every definition of religion since the appearance of Schleiermacher's discourses,"† we must conclude that the term "instinct" is here used in a popular and unscientific sense. Yet such statements contain an element of truth, the truth, namely, that religion is deeply rooted in human nature, so that the spontaneous organizing of experience into what we call religion is the normal and natural thing for man. Yet the religious tendency is not a simple elementary constituent of our nature which we can discover by analysis, but which cannot itself be further analysed. Religion is rather the synthetic organization of the elemental instincts and emotions of our being in the pursuit of ideal ends. Such a synthesis is, indeed, the expression of a fundamental and permanent need of our nature. But to attribute it to a religious instinct is to over-simplify a complex phenomenon.

* W. McDougall, *Social Psychology* (12th ed., 1917), p. 89.

† M. Jastrow, *The Study of Religion* (1901), pp. 101, 153.

Equally unsatisfactory is it to account for religion by saying that man has a *religious faculty*. Here we have another instance of the old and easy method of explaining a special kind of activity by inventing a special faculty as its organ. But the days of the old "faculty psychology" are gone. To imagine a separate religious faculty functioning apart from the rest of the mind is to ignore the fundamental unity of the human mind. The departmental view of mind which thinks of one aspect as operating in abstraction from the others is thoroughly unscientific. Religious experience is made up of the same elements as the rest of conscious life, and the psychology of religion deals with the same "human stuff" as psychology generally. There is no part of man's psychical nature which can be labelled religious in the sense that it is that part *alone* which functions in his religious life and that it functions *only* in the religious life.

Another instance of a fallacious simplification of the problem is the one that attributes the origin of religion to one single elemental emotion. The most famous example of this is the very old theory which found in the emotion of *fear* the ultimate spring of religion. This view found its classical exponent in the Epicurean philosophers and the Latin poet Lucretius, who identified religion with superstition. It is well summed up in the famous line of Petronius, *primus in orbe deos fecit timor*. In modern times Hume reverted to the position of Lucretius and emphasized fear as the motive to religious acts, though he was careful to add that

fear of the gods was tempered by the *hope* of securing their goodwill. Some recent psychologists—*e.g.*, Ribot—have given their support to the fear theory. And there can be no doubt that fear does play a predominant part, especially in the lowest religions. A vague terror of the mysterious forces of Nature pervades the life of the savage and leads him to endeavour by acts of propitiation to win over to his side the hostile powers by which he is surrounded. Among uncivilised peoples, while the good spirits are known, much more attention is paid to warding off the wrath of malevolent spirits than to securing the favour of good ones. The tendency is to let alone the good spirits, because, being good, they will do no harm. It is thus fear of the evil spirits that leads to actual religious activities. But it is quite another thing to say that the simple emotion of fear is an adequate cause of religion in general. We have already supported the view that a sense of awe in the presence of the mysterious potencies of the universe is the most fundamental religious emotion. But awe is not to be identified simply with fear, though fear is an ingredient in it. In the words of Dr. Marett, "awe is not the same thing as 'pure funk.' '*Primus in orbe deos fecit timor*' is only true if we admit wonder, admiration, interest, respect, even love perhaps, to be, no less than fear, essential constituents of this elemental mood."* It

* R. R. Marett, *The Threshold of Religion* (2nd ed., 1914), p. 13. For a psychological analysis of the complex emotion of awe see W. McDougall, *op. cit.*, 131 *f.*

is obvious that fear is inadequate to account for the religious consciousness in its more developed stages, where the emotion of fear is absorbed into the more positive emotions of wonder, admiration, gratitude, reverence. But even in the mind of the savage there are the germs of trust and hope, and a sense of the positive values which he desires to acquire or conserve. The flower of religion is love, and "perfect love casteth out fear," not, however, in the sense of uprooting and destroying it, but in the sense of sublimating and transfiguring it. According to Dr. McDougall's classification of the instincts and emotions, the correlative of the emotion of fear is the instinct of flight. But surely religious awe cannot be simply reduced into the impulse to run away from its object; it is rather a state of emotional tension resulting from the action of two contrary impulses—the impulse to withdraw from its object in "godly fear" on the one hand, and the sense of being attracted towards it in wonder, gratitude, and love, on the other. If the former impulse is more prominent than the latter in primitive religion, it is only because (as Professor Leuba has pointed out) fear was the first of the emotions to become organized in human life, the circumstances of savage life being such as to keep fear ever in the foreground of consciousness owing to the severity of his struggle for existence in face of many perils real and imaginary. Yet love and gratitude, though they did not develop as quickly, are just as natural, just as much integral parts of the constitution of man, as fear.

That religion had its origin in a sense of kinship with the gods, rather than in fear of them as hostile beings, was strongly maintained by W. Robertson Smith, as in the following well-known passage: "However true it is that savage man feels himself to be environed by innumerable dangers which he does not understand, and so personifies as invisible or mysterious enemies of more than human power, it is not true that the attempt to appease these powers is the foundation of religion. From the earliest times, religion, as distinct from magic or sorcery, addresses itself to kindred and friendly beings, who may indeed be angry with their people for a time, but are always placable except to the enemies of their worshippers or to renegade members of the community. It is not with a vague fear of unknown powers, but with a loving reverence for known gods who are knit to their worshippers by strong bonds of kinship, that religion in the only true sense of the word begins."* Smith has probably here overstated the case, basing it on his theory, already referred to, that totemism—the worship of blood-ancestors of the clan—was the original form of religion in the true sense of the word. But his statement supplies a corrective to the one-sided fear theory. Of this there can be no doubt, that in the higher religions fear is sublimated by love into an adoring reverence. But however transfigured it may be, the element of awe remains. It is a favourite doctrine

* W. R. Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 55. *Cf.* F. B. Jevons, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-110.

of the Old Testament that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (*e.g.*, Ps. cxi. 10, Prov. ix. 10), and in the New Testament we are exhorted to "worship God acceptably—but with godly fear and awe" (Heb. xii. 28, Moffatt's translation).

II.

The results we have arrived at so far are mainly negative. There is *no* separate element of man's psychical nature that can be labelled specifically religious. There is no instinct or faculty or emotion or any psychic element which can be described as religious in the sense that it is not found in the non-religious or secular type of experience. Even if we were to hold that religion has its roots in fear, it would still be obvious that fear is not exclusively a religious emotion, that not all fear is religious fear. Nor is the religious consciousness a mere aggregate or mosaic of many psychic elements. It is an organized whole which is greater than the sum of its parts. The ultimate elements of human nature are the same in saint and sensualist; the difference lies in the organizing principle or purpose. And all organization is *with a view* to something. The psychological problem of the origin of religion can best be answered, at least in the first instance, not by pulling the mind to pieces to discover the constituent element which makes man religious, but by getting, as it were, "inside" the religious consciousness by an act of sympathetic imagination, in order to apprehend it in its whole living movement and to appreciate the

"what for?" of that movement. What do men *want* when they are religious? What are they aiming at? What are they making for?

The point of view here is that of functional or dynamic psychology rather than that of structural or static psychology. "Functional psychology should be, first and foremost, a psychology of personal self-realizations" rather than of mental mechanisms.* Static psychology, too, has its use and cannot be dispensed with. It studies the several aspects of consciousness, as it were, in a state of repose, analysing experience into its component parts and describing each part by itself without reference to the functions it subserves in the living whole. Perhaps this is the only way in which we can describe all the phases of consciousness with anything like minuteness. But this method distorts the facts by representing the indivisible stream of consciousness as if it were a series of static particles, arranged, indeed, in ever-varying order, yet in such a way that all the particles retain their self-identity like marbles in a boy's pocket. And so it is important that, though we may occasionally make use of the method of structural or analytic psychology, we should assiduously cultivate the functional point of view and study consciousness as an organic or teleological movement towards certain values or satisfactions. The method of functional psychology is indispensable in the study of the religious

* G. A. Coe, *The Psychology of Religion* (1916), p. 30. See the whole of chap. ii.

consciousness. Our first question, then, is, What is the religious consciousness aiming at? What does it want? What value or values does it seek to realise? And it will be well for us to bear in mind that the teleological point of view which we are now adopting involves not only the question of the *end* sought for, but also of the *means* whereby that end is to be realized. End and means belong organically together in a teleological movement, and the one is a mere abstraction without the other. They are momenta or aspects in a series of ever-expanding self-realizations. And what was at first a mere means to an end, exploited, perhaps, in a somewhat utilitarian spirit, may in course of human evolution become an end in itself, whereas what was originally the end aimed at may then be attained indirectly or as a by-product in the course of pursuing what is now regarded as the higher end. The bearing of this on our problem will, it is hoped, become clear later.

We ought to start at the point where we left off at the end of our last chapter. We there arrived at the conclusion that religion came to its birth amidst the consciousness, more emotional than ideational, of mysterious powers supposed to be vitally affecting human life. But why should this lead to religious *behaviour?* Why should primitive man seek to enter into friendly relations with the mysterious forces around him? Obviously because he felt that in the diffused wonder-working *mana* there was a reservoir of power which was available for his own use in the struggle for existence. The

basal impulse which we must take into account is the *will to live*, both in its negative aspect, the will to self-preservation against the forces of destruction and death, and in its positive aspect, the will to life's joy and fulness and power ("the will to power"). The struggle for bare subsistence in itself must have been so severe for primitive man that any reinforcement of power which promised to supplement his own meagre resource and skill would be eagerly welcomed and made use of, and such reinforcement he found in the supernormal agencies which he felt were at work around him and which he sought by petition and propitiation to enlist on his side in the fight for existence.

Thus religion is from the first rooted in biological necessity, the struggle for life. "The hunger for life comes into being with life itself, and as that life advances in quantity and quality, the craving for life organizes itself upon an increasing scale of extensiveness and intensiveness."* It thus abides as a motive in religion all along the line of its development, for the primal will to live is never outgrown in the history of the race; if it were, it would mean racial suicide. Religion is essentially an eternal going out in search of completeness and wholeness of life, a quest for life in its qualitative wealth of content as well as in its quantitative fulness and range. Buddhism—the despair of all who attempt an all-comprehensive definition of religion—may indeed present itself as

* J. Lewis, *Vital and Social Factors in Religion* (1920), p. 27.

an obstinate exception to this statement, inasmuch as it encourages its adherents to paralyse all desire, including the very desire for life, and sets before them as the goal of life Nirvana, emancipation from all passion, the state of eternal repose and sleep which is indistinguishable from eternal death. We cannot here pause to discuss this difficulty. We can only say that Nirvana, which seems to the Western mind to be the very apotheosis of negativity, may well seem to the initiated to be infinite positivity, the inner harmony of life in a state of absolute equilibrium, which seems negative only because it transcends all finite determinations; that in any case the Nirvana of later Buddhism is a Paradise where the souls of men live in conscious blessedness; and that in so far as Buddhism aims at the extinction of conscious life it is not, strictly speaking, a religion at all, but a kind of esoteric philosophy. Of religion proper it may be said that, appropriating the words attributed to Christ in the Fourth Gospel, it came that men may have life and have it abundantly, and that the creative human impulse behind it is the passion for an ampler and a richer life. "The just shall *live* by faith." Faith is a way of life.

> "'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
> Oh life, not death, for which we pant,
> More life, and fuller, that we want."

It may be objected to this view that the impulse referred to ("the will to live") is *biological* and not in any sense distinctively *religious*, that it is too general to be relevant to our special problem,

inasmuch as it is the driving force of human life generally and not of the religious life alone, that it is not limited even to man, but operates equally among the other animals, which are likewise engaged in the dire struggle for existence and even in a sense for self-realization, yet have not evolved (so far as we know) a religion! Is religion, it may be asked, nothing more than a biological necessity?

We answer, in the first place, that functional psychology is bound to include the biological point of view, though it must include more. Religion, like all other aspects of the psychic life, is ultimately rooted in the soil of biology, though it does not find its full meaning there, for there is more in the fruit than in the root, more in the flower than in the seed. There is something gained if we have succeeded in relating the psychic to the biological, for it means that religion is not something artificially imposed upon man from without as an alien element, that it has its source deep down in the ultimate spring from whence flows the river of life as a whole, that it has its roots in the primal energies which are behind all human activity, and that therefore the religious consciousness is organic to the whole life of man.

Secondly, it may be claimed that man's unquenchable thirst for life finds *fuller* satisfaction in religious experience than in any other type of experience, that he finds in religion an ampler and more abundant life than in any other kind of behaviour. Religion raises his life above the mere

biological plane, above the mere struggle for bare existence, and gives him a taste of the higher satisfactions which are to be found in the attainment of goodness, beauty, and truth. It may be true that it does not introduce into man's experience any absolutely new value—for goodness, beauty, and truth are values known or sought after in forms of experience other than the distinctively religious—but in his religious life man seeks to organize or reorganize these values into a unified and comprehensive system of life, such system or way of life appearing to him to be the only true life, "the life that is life indeed," the way of full self-realization and victory. It is true that all this is only implicit in primitive religion, and becomes explicit only in the course of a long process of evolution. Even religion is at the first a method of securing material goods—success in the chase and in warfare, the control of physical nature, etc.—such goods as help man to survive in the struggle for existence; it is resorted to as a way of experiencing a feeling of security amid physical perils. But as it develops it becomes a means of satisfying not only the passion for life, but the passion for a certain *quality* of life, a method not only of maintaining and furthering physical life, but of enhancing life as to its spiritual content. Man comes to realize that he cannot live by bread alone, and that he has, like Carlyle's "shoeblack," "a Soul quite other than his Stomach," which hungers and thirsts after higher satisfactions than material things can give. Religion is potentially spiritual from the first—for

it implies a sense that life is controlled by unseen forces which are vaguely felt to be more than physical or material—but its essential spirituality is only made explicit as man's experience grows and deepens (see Appendix).

Thirdly, religion is differentiated from all other means of satisfying the craving for life and of realizing its ideals by the fact that it invokes the aid of a class of powers which may be described as superhuman, psychic, usually personal—the gods. It is true that, if the view we put forth in our last chapter can be sustained, at the crude beginnings of things there was no clear distinction drawn between personal and impersonal powers, and therefore between religion and magic. But the more the distinction came to be apprehended, the more religion tended to concentrate on agencies conceived of as anthropathic if not anthropomorphic. We cannot agree with those who, laying the whole emphasis on the valuational attitude in religion, affirm that that attitude involves no *necessary* reference to any higher powers or gods. As against these we agree (with qualifications) with Professor Leuba when he declares: "That which differentiates religion from other forms of conduct is the kind of power upon which dependence is felt. . . . Religion is that part of human experience in which man feels himself in relation with powers of psychic nature, usually personal powers, and makes use of them."* "The will-to-live comes

* J. H. Leuba, *A Psychological Study of Religion* (1912), p. 52. See the whole of Part I.

to expression as religion when an appeal is made to a class of powers which may be roughly characterized as psychic, superhuman, and usually, but not necessarily, personal."* Thus religion is a method of enhancing and enriching life by the aid of supernatural agencies in whom are supposed to reside resources which are greater than such as abide in man, but which are available to man on certain conditions. Leuba goes so far as to say: "It is not the needs which are distinctive of religion, but the method whereby they are gratified."† This view may be open to the objection that "here the divine beings appear as mere means to ends, the ends being completely determined, it appears, without reference to the gods."‡ It may be felt to be an irreligious view of the gods to regard them in a utilitarian spirit as beings whose value is merely instrumental, beings whose only *raison d'être* is to serve as means for the enhancement of human life rather than as beings to be adored and loved for their own sakes. This may be a pertinent criticism of the theory in the form in which Leuba has presented it. But as we have previously suggested, we refuse to draw a hard and fast line between "end" and "means." Indeed, it is the very miracle of evolution that what was at first a mere means to an end may become transformed for consciousness into an end in itself, and that it works *more* effectively as means when it is no

* *Ibid.*, p. 7.
† *Ibid.*, p. 8.
‡ G. A. Coe, *op. cit.*, 63.

longer regarded as such than when it was looked upon as something merely instrumental. It is thus, for instance, that æsthetic values and truth-values have gradually disengaged themselves from the utilitarian treatment of them as mere weapons in the battle of life, and that beauty and truth have become valuable in themselves apart from their usefulness, and then it is that they enhance life most effectively. And so in the realm of religious experience. In the highest ranges of the religious life the gods are not regarded merely as beings whose favour is to be courted for the sake of personal advantage, but as beings to be disinterestedly loved and served for their own sakes. In the highest religions God is not merely a means to certain ends the value of which can be defined independently of Him; He is rather Himself the highest value, and all the ends of life are defined in terms of the divine will and character. The loftiest attitude of religious experience is represented in Christ's prayer, "Not My will, but Thine, be done." And yet it is in that attitude that man's life reaches its fullest and richest development, though it is no longer self-realization or self-enrichment but the fulfilment of God's will that consciously occupies the mind as the ultimate end or value.

Bearing these qualifications in mind, and recognizing the difficulty of devising one single formula which will do justice to all the complex phenomena of religious experience, we venture to think that the view which promises to be the most fruitful

is, that religion, regarded from the standpoint of functional psychology, is essentially a quest for life. But a further consideration has to be added if the full meaning of this is to be realized. In the foregoing paragraphs we have frequently spoken of "man" in the singular number, in a way which might be taken to imply that the passion for life, and religion as its expression, is essentially a matter of individual experience. But it is a commonplace of modern psychology that there is no such thing as a *merely* individual experience. There is no such thing as man in the singular. He is always and everywhere a member of a social group. A separate individual is an abstraction of thought, though it is well to remember that society regarded as distinct from individuals is equally an abstraction. The real thing is Human Life, which may be considered either in an individual aspect or in a social, but is always, as a matter of fact, both individual and social.* To speak in terms of the individual versus society is to speak in terms of a false antithesis. Multitudinous strands drawn from the social environment are interwoven into the very fabric of individual experience; and society, on the other hand, derives its very life-blood from the individuals who compose it. The point which concerns us here is this, that the craving for "more life and fuller" of which we have spoken is not something merely individualistic or egoistic, a mere passion for *self*-realization if "self" be

* *Cf.* J. B. Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness* (1921), p. 76.

regarded in abstraction from the group. It is a hunger for the realization of Human Life, both individual and social. Least of all in the earliest stages of society did it take the form of the struggle for *self*-preservation; more conspicuously it was a struggle for *clan*-preservation. The security of the individual and of the clan were regarded as involved in each other.

> "For the strength of the pack is the wolf,
> And the strength of the wolf is the pack."

The individual can only attain fulness of life in so far as he partakes of and contributes to the life of the community. The antithesis between egoism and altruism is artificial. The instinct of parenthood (the germ of all altruism) is as ancient and fundamental as the instinct of self-defence; the life-giving impulse is as primitive as the life-preserving. Self-realization through self-sacrifice is the law of life. "Every self-sacrifice is at the same time self-preservation—namely, preservation of the *ideal* self."* And it is by way of religious experience most of all that men come to possess this insight into the true way of life and that the individual is uplifted above the pettiness of selfish desire and disciplined to subordinate his own life to the larger life of the community. As we have seen, religion has been from the first an affair of society, whereas magic has tended to be anti-social. In its earlier stages especially, it aimed at the preservation and efficiency of the social group. The

* Paulsen, *System of Ethics*, p. 389.

community rather than the individual was the religious unit. It is true that later on, as the value of the individual life came to be realized, religion came to be in a more intensive way a matter of individual experience and conviction, of personal self-realizations, personal salvation. This was an immense gain. But it is vain to imagine that the influence of the community can ever be shaken off, or that it would be an advantage if it were shaken off. Not only is the vital impulsion of which religion is an expression always more or less conditioned by the social environment, but it is only within the social organism that the highest values can be rendered stable and enduring.

There is thus an important element of truth in the view of those who, like Durkheim and the other members of the French sociological school, maintain that religion is essentially a social phenomenon. Yet it is going too far to say that religion is simply an instrument whereby society controls individuals and makes them subservient to itself. It is quite as true to say that religion strengthens individuals against society, and it is this fact that makes religious progress possible. Society on the whole is conservative; it seeks to conserve the values which it thinks have already been discovered, by embodying them in customs, traditions, institutions, creeds. But initiative, the will to progress, the impetus to fresh discoveries, emancipations, expansions, these come in the main from prophetic and original souls who have the courage to break away from conventions and to

dissent from socially recognized values, believing that they have had visions of a fuller and more abundant life which is possible for themselves and for society. On the other hand, it must be recognized that these prophets and pioneers are themselves largely products of society, and represent the community itself at its growing point. Nor are they content that their visions should be nothing more than their own private experience. They desire to see their ideals incorporated in the life of the community and so become socialized, universalized, objectified, and conserved in the corporate experience of the race. The conclusion of the whole matter is that the individual and society, in so far as they are separable at all, are necessary to each other, and that behind both social and individual religion there is the same vital impulsion, the same craving for the realization of life.

III.

Let us now discuss the psychological problem of religion more analytically, and seek to discover more specifically what are the *psychical factors that determine the origin and development of religion.* Before we can do this we must know something of the *psychic nature of man.* For, as we have seen, there is no special organ or faculty of religion. Man takes with him into his religion exactly the same psychic factors as he takes with him into all other kinds of behaviour. We shall here take for granted the now traditional analysis of human nature into feeling, will, and thought. There is

a tendency amongst some modern psychologists to return to a twofold division, somewhat similar to that of the Aristotelian psychology, taking feeling in close association with volition over against cognition. But for our purposes here it is better to proceed on the basis of the threefold division. We accept as our starting-point the view thus succinctly expressed by Leuba: "Will, feeling, and thought enter in some degree into every moment of consciousness which can be looked upon as an actuality, and not merely as an abstraction; they are necessary constituents of consciousness. The unit of conscious life is neither thought, nor feeling, nor will, but all three in movement towards an object."* But while it is true that each of the three constituents are present in every phase of experience, it does not follow that all three are equally primary and central, either as factors in the evolution of the race and of the individual, or in the intensity of their presence in any given mood or attitude or moment of our life. Can any one of the three be held to occupy a primary place in consciousness, and to constitute the very core and nerve of human life, not only in its developed form, but in the process of development itself? Has one of them functioned more vitally than the others in the whole evolution of man?

The older view gave the pride of place to *thought*. "Man is a rational animal;" such was the traditional definition. The Rationalists of the

* J. H. Leuba, *The Psychological Origin and the Nature of Religion*, p. 8.

eighteenth century, both in England and in France, idealized primitive man in quite an idyllic fashion, representing him as a purely rational being whose reason had not yet been corrupted by the trickery of priests or by the conventions of civilization; but the study of savage psychology has shown how remote from reality was the picture. The "New Psychology" of to-day has shown—with what exaggeration of emphasis it may be for the still newer psychology of to-morrow to show—that even the modern educated European is by no means governed by pure reason, that he is to a greater degree than we imagine ruled by irrational impulses and subconscious "complexes," and that the "reasons" he gives for his actions are but afterthoughts cunningly devised to conceal from himself and others his real motives.

In recent years there has been a marked tendency to swing back from intellectualism to voluntarism, and to accentuate *will* as the integral function of consciousness. This movement goes back for its inspiration to Kant's emphasis on the "primacy of the Practical Reason" as distinguished from the pure theoretic reason. From Kant, through Fichte, Schopenhauer, and others, it has passed into modern psychology as represented by such men as Wundt and Höffding (just as in theology it appears in Ritschlianism with its practical "value-judgments," and in philosophy in Pragmatism with its "*will* to believe"). The theory is stated by Leuba thus: "The will is primal; or, in other words, conscious life is always oriented towards something to be

secured or avoided immediately or ultimately." In support of this view Leuba says: "Will without intelligence may be possible" [surely not; Leuba himself admits on the next page that "every pulse of consciousness is psychically compounded of will, feeling, and thought"]; "but intelligence without will is not [possible], not even in the case of so-called distinterested, theoretic thinking. There is, there can be, no thinking without desire, intention, or purpose. . . . Thought absolutely undirected would be not even a dream—mere meaningless, chaotic atoms of thought. It is *the intention, the purpose*, which makes thought what it is; that is to say, significant. We think because we will. Thought does not exist for itself; it is the instrument of desire. . . . The mastery of desire over thought is abundantly illustrated in the history of belief."* All this emphasis on the instrumental character of thought is much to the point as against a one-sided psychological intellectualism, in which thought is conceived as functioning, as it were, *in vacuo*, or in abstraction from the rest of the mind, uninfluenced by desire, undirected by will or purpose. Nothing can be more certain than that man is never merely "a rational animal." He cannot think without a motive, and motive is rooted in impulse, desire, purpose. But Leuba's statements do not take sufficient account of the fact that, just as he says that thought is not possible without conation to give it aim and direction, so conation implies

* J. H. Leuba, *The Psychological Origin and the Nature of Religion* (1909), pp. 6-8.

some kind of thinking, however inarticulate and crude, or at least some awareness of an object desired, in order that it may have some content. There can be no mere desire, any more than mere thought. We must desire *something*, and what that something is is a matter of cognition. Yet we are justified in saying that will or desire is relatively more primitive, central, creative, as a factor in human evolution than thought. Conscious reflective thought certainly developed much later in the history of man than the will to live, and developed as the instrument of that will. Man's primary concern is to live, and in the main he desires to *know* only in order to *live*. But here again what was at first a means to an end may become, approximately, an end in itself, truth being then regarded as valuable for its own sake and not because of its immediate utility. The disinterested pursuit of truth for its own sake is surely an ideal not to be lost sight of, though even that very ideal cannot be pursued except in so far as we have the *will* to pursue it, the *desire* for it.

But it may be maintained that *feeling* is even more primary than will. It is true that, in the earlier stages of the development both of the individual and of the race, feeling cannot be sharply distinguished from will. They are practically fused in the undifferentiated life of impulse. And yet it is possible, at least in thought, to draw a clear distinction between them. For feeling is an attitude of passivity (pleasure-pain) in relation to the object, will is an attitude of activity in relation to it. And

it would appear that feeling is the innermost, most intimate core of personality. The sensitiveness to pleasure and pain is the very nerve of life; it is the point at which we come to realize our own vitality and individuality. Our feelings seem to us to be the deepest and most vivid of our experiences. The recognition of the basal importance of feeling as a factor in experience came to modern theology and philosophy through the influence of Schleiermacher, and later of Lotze.

1. Let us, then, seek to trace the development of religion from its genesis in *feeling* as the core of the psychical life. In starting with feeling we do not suggest that even in its beginnings religion is a matter of mere feeling, without any element of volition or cognition whatever. As we have seen, feeling in that sense is an abstraction that has no real existence. We simply mean that feeling is at first more prominent and intense than the other functions, and that even in the highest developments of religion feeling remains indispensable and central. In it what is most intimate, vital, and personal in religion is expressed. If man's attitude to God were not suffused by a feeling tone, even though it be but a subdued feeling of peace and satisfaction, it would probably not be recognized as a religious attitude at all. Hence it is that ever since Schleiermacher an important group of thinkers have insisted on the primacy of feeling in religious experience. The most notable and eloquent presentation of this view is still that of Schleiermacher in his *Reden über die Religion*

(1799), where the essence of religion is said to be the soul's feeling of immediate contact and fusion with the infinite.* In his later and more systematic work, *Der Christliche Glaube* (1821-22), is to be found his famous definition of religion as the feeling of absolute dependence on God. In his well-known and in some ways epoch-making lectures on *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), Professor William James maintains that "feeling is the deeper source of religion," and that "philosophic and theological formulas are secondary products, like translations of a text into another tongue" (p. 431). And without committing ourselves to the views of these writers we may recognize the centrality of feeling in religious experience.

But *what kind of* feeling is religious feeling? Many answers to this question have been given, including Lucretius's "fear," Schleiermacher's "feeling of absolute dependence on God," and Höffding's feeling determined by the faith in the conservation of values.† We have already adopted the view that the most primitive religious emotion is awe (which is largely, but not wholly, fear) in the presence of unknown but mighty powers. Religious emotion in its developed form is a complex sentiment involving awe, wonder, admiration, gratitude, hope, feeling of dependence, love, sense

* See J. Oman's translation, *Schleiermacher on Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* (1893).

† Höffding's *Religionsphilosophie* (1901), p. 96; E. Tr. (1906), pp. 106 *f*, *et passim*.

of comfort and strength, peace, joy, sometimes ecstasy and rapture. In the more primitive types of religious experience, religious emotion is apt to express itself in violent and delirious excitement, as in the religious dances of the American Indians and African negroes, the initiation ceremonies of the Australians, the wild frenzy of the Bacchanal orgies in the old Dionysus-worship, and in ancient and modern "revivals." In the more normal acts of worship as organized in the higher religions, feeling is generally more restrained and more closely associated with intellectual ideas. But the feeling element remains, though in a more chastened form. Without the feeling tone worship becomes mechanical, cold, unreal, formal, a thing of tradition and custom. Another form in which feeling puts forth a claim to govern religious experience is *Mysticism*. The mystic craves for immediate contact with Divine Reality through the intuitions and emotions of the heart. But valuable as mysticism is as a protest against barren intellectualism on the one hand and ritualistic formalism on the other, the pure mystical state is without form or content. It is doubtful whether the immediate feeling of the Eternal can have either form or content until it has been translated into thought and action. As William James admits, "feeling is private and dumb, and unable to give an account of itself. It allows that its results are mysteries and enigmas, declines to justify them rationally, and on occasion is willing that they should even pass for paradoxical and

absurd. . . . To redeem religion from unwholesome privacy, and to give public status and universal right of way to its deliverances, has been reason's task."* To this it must be added that religious feeling must pass through the crucible of the *will* as well as of the intellect. It must be not only *thought* out, but *lived* out. It must be translated into action.

2. This leads us to religion as *a kind of activity, a type of behaviour.* Intense emotion naturally issues in action. When it does not so issue, some unnatural inhibition has taken place, and then the emotion is biologically incomplete. If an emotion evaporates without finding expression in behaviour, it fails to discharge its function, for the mind is a biological instrument oriented towards action. In fact, emotion is itself a kind of nascent action; it is "the response of an organism to a situation." Apart from selective purpose or intention, resulting in behaviour, feeling is blind and meaningless. It is only as feeling is connected with practical ends which the will seeks to realize that it fills its place in the unity of life or acquires any meaning. And the action which expresses the emotion helps, in turn, to intensify the emotion itself. All this is true of the religious life. Religion as an inward feeling demands outward expression. As a mere subjective emotion it is psychologically incomplete. As a complete thing it is a kind of behaviour, a kind of activity controlled by purpose. The sense

* Wm. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), p. 432.

of awe in the presence of the mysterious powers of the universe (the primitive religious emotion) would not be religion unless it issued in an attempt to organize some sort of practical relation to such powers with a view to securing their help and friendship. Religion, as we have maintained, originates in practical needs under the pressure of the struggle for life, and grows with the growth of these needs. The organization of the religious life in overt act or behaviour led to the establishment of the cult or institutional religion. The cult had its origin in impulsive acts, under stress of emotion, by which primitive man sought to gain the favour of the invisible powers and so to gain an advantage in the struggle for existence. These unorganized acts, the spontaneous expression of vivid emotion, often took the form of "religious" dances, thought of as promoting the success of the hunt or of war. But inasmuch as such acts were of a social character—*i.e.*, were performed by a group—they immediately came under the control of custom and began to be organized so as to rule out individual caprice. Thus they came to acquire fixity, uniformity, sanctity, and the historic continuity of a religion was guaranteed in its external rites. The rites were repeated with little or no change from generation to generation, and gathered around them the whole weight of tribal sanction. By such repetitions the original emotion was reawakened and intensified. The cult (or public worship) consists of two main types of action—*sacrifice* and *prayer*. Round about these

two central rites grew the whole paraphernalia of institutional religion, temples, altars, priesthoods, and rituals generally.

But religion as behaviour is not confined to ritual, though ritual is its most characteristic feature. Religious service has tended from very early times, and all the more as religion developed and became more ethical, to include *conduct* beyond the range of the cult—namely, such conduct as was regarded as well-pleasing to the higher powers. Thus morality came to be placed more and more under the guardianship of religion. Duty to the gods widened out so as to embrace the sphere of daily conduct, including especially duty to one's fellow-men, as sanctioned, enforced, or inspired by religion. These, then, are the two chief aspects of religion as behaviour or activity: (1) the ceremonial aspect, or the cult, and (2) the ethical aspect, or morality. The emphasis of the former is on the *difference* between the sacred and the secular; the latter tends ultimately to make *all* life sacred. The former inclines to sacerdotalism, sacramentarianism; the latter would invest the whole of life with sacramental significance. Hence there often exists a sense of strain between these two attitudes. There is often a sharp conflict between the priest, with his insistence on the due performance of ritual, and the prophet, with his insistence on righteous conduct as a more important part of the service of God than ritual. The prophets of the Old Testament, for instance, were great exponents of ethical as against ritualistic

religion (*e.g.*, see Isa. i. 10-17, Mic. vi. 6-8; *cf.* Jas. i. 27). And the question may be asked whether there is any place for the cult in the highest form of religion. Is corporate worship essential to religion? Or is it destined to be absorbed into the wider conception of religion as a universal attitude of life to which there is nothing common or secular, rather than as something departmental or institutional? We would answer that while there must needs be an increasing emphasis on the ethical side of religion as something co-extensive with the whole of life, there will always be an important place for corporate worship. The problem for religion is not to destroy or abolish the cult, but to make it a more adequate expression of the progressive spirit of man and to connect it more vitally with the ethical life. The danger of ceremonial religion has to be recognized and guarded against. The cult is ever in danger of becoming the strongest bulwark of conservatism and of vested interests. When the main stress falls on the due performance of the outward ritual, religion runs the risk of becoming a matter of mechanical routine, convention, and tradition, divorced from the more progressive intellectual life and from the sincere ethical spirit with its demand for reality, and to the neglect of the inner side of religion as personal piety. Yet in spite of these very real dangers it is essential to religion that it be organized and given corporate expression in some kind of "church" or ritual.

3. *Religion as Belief.*—Religion has its intel-

lectual as well as its emotional and volitional aspect. This does not mean that religion had its *origin* in man's effort to find an intellectual solution of the problems of life and reality. Conscious reflective thought is, as we have seen, a relatively late feature of human evolution, and emerged as the instrument of the "will to live" rather than of a pure, motiveless "will to know." In referring to the "incorrectness of the intellectualist psychology that has assumed that religious ideas are self-sustaining logical entities," Coe aptly declares: "These ideas are sustained by something that makes them interesting or important—by impulses and emotional attitudes. Religion is not a product of intellectual leisure, but of the grind of existence —a grind that ever seeks to transform itself into freedom and joy."* Marett has well said that savage religion is not so much thought out as danced out. And yet we are not prepared to follow the fashion of the hour by depreciating over-much the place of thought in religion and life. If we cannot attribute the *origin* of religion to pure intellectual curiosity, there can be no doubt that in the *development* of religion thought is a most important factor. Both inner feeling and outer behaviour are apt to be extremely conservative, except in so far as they are subjected to the criticism of reflective thought and gradually compelled to expand and adapt themselves to the increasing light of knowledge.

* G. A. Coe, *The Psychology of Religion* (1916), p. 60.

Some element of cognition or belief must be present even in the most elementary stages of the religious life. Here, indeed, thought is in bondage to instinct. But even here there is some kind of belief, some act of judgment, as when an object, taken as real, is qualified by the predicate divine or described as possessing *mana*. As thought develops it becomes less chained to instinct and more free to soar on the wings of creative imagination. A highly developed type of imaginative thinking is that so abundantly exemplified in *mythology*. A myth is an attempted explanation in terms of the imagination of the origin of religious practices which had sprung up spontaneously long before the myth itself. It is childlike picture-thinking; it is science and theology in the form of tales. Mythology differs essentially from science and philosophy in its more pictorial mode of presentation and its freer use of poetic personifying language. Hegel maintained that religion proper never gets beyond the stage of apprehending reality in concrete imaginative terms, while it is only speculative thought or philosophy that makes the attempt to comprehend the pure idea (*Begriff*) that lies behind the image (*Vorstellung*). But this hard and fast distinction between religious belief and philosophy cannot be sustained. The element of truth in it is that religion does make much freer use of symbol than pure philosophy does. But on the one hand even philosophy cannot completely abandon symbolic imagery—unless, indeed, it abandons the effort to express itself in language

at all, for language is steeped in imagery. On the other hand, religious thought has sought and does seek to pass beyond the limits of mere symbolism whenever it seriously endeavours to relate the symbol to reality. To be content with symbolism without raising any questions about the truth of that which it is sought to symbolize is to be satisfied with mere subjectivity. Thought is necessary to relate the subjectively satisfying symbol to the objective order of truth and reality.

Hence in the higher religions there emerges *theology*, which is an attempt to interpret religious values in terms of thought. And finally there emerges the *philosophy of religion*, interpreting the meaning of religious experience and examining the objective grounds of its validity. The effort of thought on its highest levels is thus to reach forth to universal objective truth. The core of religious experience, we have seen, is feeling. But feeling is subjective; thought aims at being objective. Once you seek to communicate your feelings to others (or even to make their meaning articulate to yourself), you have to employ language and general ideas, and the function of thought is to see that those general ideas are in themselves true and not merely a reflection of your own subjective feelings. Inasmuch as religion represents a thinking as well as an emotional and volitional attitude, the religious mind will always want a theology. But theology is apt to crystallize into a dogmatic system, which is the product of logical reflection working on the content of religious experience.

And a dogma which in one period is the intellectual expression of religious experience is likely to become in a later period a stumbling-block and a real hindrance to progress. It tends to stereotype and to sterilize experience, and claims finality, infallibility, immutability. Dogma is static, rigid, immobile; the spiritual life is dynamic, fluid, experimental, adaptive. Just as Bergson declares "that the metaphysicians have dug a deep tunnel beneath reality, that the scientists have thrown an elegant bridge over it, but that the moving stream of things passes between these two artificial constructions without touching them,"* so we may say that a dogma represents a vain attempt to cast into the fixed mould of a rigid formula the living reality of spiritual experience. Hence progressive religious thought has ever two functions to discharge: (1) the negative function of criticizing the dogma which has ceased or is ceasing to be an adequate expression of the intellectual content of the faith, showing its inadequacy in relation to the ever-expanding knowledge and experience of men, and (2) the positive function of restating or reconstructing religious truth in harmony with what is best in contemporary knowledge, experience, and aspiration. In this way reflective thought may become, as it has often been, a most important instrument of religious progress, enabling the human spirit to pass from crude, inadequate, ignorant views of God and of life to more en-

* H. Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (E. Tr. 1913), p. 68.

lightened and truly spiritual levels. It is true that the creative principle of all religion is in piety and not in thoughts about piety, and that experience is richer than logical categories. But the doctrinal expression of religion answers to an imperative need of the epoch of intellectual growth in which we live.

In the whole of the above discussion of the psychic factors that account for the origin and development of religion, we have adopted what some may regard as the old-fashioned course of concentrating on *conscious* processes of the mind. We have not touched the question how far the roots of religion are to be found in the dim regions of *subconsciousness*, as William James in his *Varieties* maintained, or in the still dimmer regions of the "*unconscious*," as Freud, Jung, and other "new psychologists" would have us believe. Our reason for passing over this question is that it is not relevant to our present purpose. What we have been trying to find out is what religion is *for consciousness*, once it has emerged into it, by whatsoever process it arrived there—our purpose being to understand the meaning and function of religion in man's conscious life. We admit of course that our conscious life is largely moulded by influences which come to us from the vast backgrounds and undergrounds of the mind. But what is highest and most significant in our experience is to be sought in our conscious state, and not in the dim outlying regions of our being where

"*meanings*" have no meaning and values do not exist. Certainly the significance of religion can only be understood in the light of what it means for consciousness and how it works in consciousness. In so far as the "New Psychology" casts doubt on the objective validity of religious beliefs by showing them to be mere shadows thrown into the void by our own irrational and unconscious impulses, it raises a problem which can only be dealt with in the last part of our inquiry, where the question of validity is to be discussed.

Chapter IV Historical Development of Religion

WE saw in our first chapter that we cannot philosophize about religion unless we have an adequate knowledge of its history. Nor is it enough to be acquainted with our own religion, or the religion which is most closely associated with the civilization within which we ourselves live and move and have our being. We must know something of the whole religious development of mankind in all stages and phases of civilization. We cannot understand what religion *is* without knowing something of what it *does* and *has done* in the wide field of human achievements and failures. Here we can only attempt the briefest and most meagre sketch of the historical evolution of religion. We are embarrassed by the superabundant wealth of material which modern research has placed at our disposal. It is by no means easy to organize this overwhelming mass of material into some sort of coherence. Within our limits the task could only be accomplished by a miracle of compression and generalization which we fear is beyond our powers. All we hope to do is to convey to the reader some vague idea of the vastness of the field, and to impress upon him the necessity of assimilating as much ordered knowledge of religion in history as possible, as a preparation for the task of philosophical interpretation, criticism, and reconstruction.

It is necessary at the outset to adopt some useful framework of classification within which we can arrange our facts. We cannot pause to consider or even to mention the many rival methods of classifying religions which have been suggested by various authorities. We have hesitated somewhat between the classification given by Tiele in his Gifford Lectures, who divides religions into (1) nature religions and (2) ethical religions, and that followed by Dr. Galloway, who divides them into (1) tribal, (2) national and (3) universal religion. On the whole we prefer Galloway's division, because it reminds us that religious development is but a phase of the development of social organization in general, and that the particular movement must participate in the features of the movement of the larger whole, though it possesses also special features of its own.* The stages in religious growth are co-ordinate with the stages in civilization and culture as a whole. The simplest form of social organization we know is the tribe. We begin therefore with tribal religion.

I.—Tribal Religion

The tribe is the rudimentary form of social union, and is the form in which all savage peoples live to-day. It is an exceedingly small and limited social group, being merely an extension of the family. Blood-relationship is the one social bond,

* See George Galloway, *Philosophy of Religion* (1914), chap. ii., and *Principles of Religious Development* (1909), chap. ii.

and the surrounding tribes are regarded as actual or potential enemies. But the tribe-group, though small, is a very compact body. The individual as such scarcely counts, he has not yet discovered his own worth. The group is all in all, it thinks and acts as one body, like Wordsworth's cloud, it "moveth all together if it move at all." There is little or no individual initiative, for the sense of individuality is a late and high product of social development. The individual is in the grip of a complicated and rigidly enforced system of social customs, and is not yet captain of his own soul. Any infringement of tribal custom is apt to be visited by terrible punishments. Perhaps Durkheim is right in maintaining that the savage feels the weight of custom upon him like an actual objective force. The vague consciousness of this mysterious force is transmitted from one generation to another, especially by means of the initiation ceremonies which transform adolescent boys into men with full membership within the community. Early religion naturally reflects this overwhelming tribal consciousness. It is a group possession, a body of customs sanctioned by the authority of tribal tradition, to which the individual renders obedience as a matter of course rather than as a matter of personal conviction. On this level man's interests are determined by the constant and severe struggle for existence, the search for food, the need of self-defence against natural perils and the attack of enemies. Hence the savage does not rise much above material wants, and his religion remains on

the same low plane. The interests that underlie his religious customs as well as his other customs are those connected with "food-getting, marriage, birth, sickness, death, initiation, war, protection from beasts and from the weather." Life is not as yet departmentalized, and religion is but vaguely if at all differentiated from other human interests. The initiation ceremonies, for instance, are religion, morality, magic, law, all in one.

Thus man's spirit is, at the first, subject to Nature and dominated by bodily needs, and the idealistic element in his nature stands in the background of his consciousness. But even now there is a deep emotional response to the invisible forces of the world, and a finding of the secret of life, "not in the things which are seen, but in the things which are not seen." Already, in the sense of awe in the presence of these mysterious powers, we have the first principle of all religion, working, indeed, in an atmosphere of profound and inveterate ignorance, but needing only to be purified in the fires of history, refined in the school of life, filled with rational and moral content, in order to develop into the highest levels of religious experience and behaviour. We need not here repeat what we said in our second chapter concerning the elementary forms of religion represented by the belief in *mana*, *animism*, and *totemism*. The historical development of religion begins with the belief in a host of spirits wielding mysterious power, which can be influenced by certain rites duly performed. The first definite advance

forward is made when the vague conception of *mana* develops into that of living *spirits* analogous to the spirit of which man is conscious within himself. The next advance is made when those spirits, first believed to be "bound" each to its natural object—*e.g.*, the stream, the rock, the tree, the cloud—come to be regarded as "free" to quit those objects at pleasure, just as it is believed that in dreams man's own spirit quits its body and roams about. Thus animism develops into *spiritism*. This is a distinct step forward, for it assumes, as Tiele has said, "an awakened consciousness of the superiority of the soul to the body and of its relative independence." "Spiritism has awakened the consciousness that in the adored beings their spirit is the essential thing, the permanent element throughout all their changes; and it has thus paved the way for that religious Spiritualism which culminates in the beautiful saying, 'God is a spirit, and whosoever worships Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth.' And thus, though in childlike and unsophisticated form, it has proclaimed a great truth."*

It must not be assumed, however, that the history of religion is a record of unbroken progress. Far otherwise. It is also a record of frequent decadence, relapse, arrested growth. If we take a wide survey of the history of mankind as a whole, as distinguished from any particular tribe, nation, or race, we find ample evidence of a most mar-

* C. P. Tiele, *The Science of Religion* (Gifford Lectures 1896), vol. i., p. 74.

vellous development, and throughout the ages the progress that is interrupted in one place is taken up in another. We shall mainly concentrate on the stages which mark progress. In primitive religion *fetishism*, however, represents retrogression rather than progression (though Tiele thinks otherwise). The term "fetish" is derived from the Portuguese *feitiço*, "a charm" (from Latin *factitius* = "artificial," in medieval Latin = "magical"), the word applied by Portuguese sailors about the fifteenth century to the objects held sacred by the West African natives. A fetish may be described as an inanimate object supposed to be inhabited, for a time at least, by a spirit, or by some mysterious potency, and as such worshipped, and perhaps carried about for luck. The object is selected, not because of its intrinsic value or importance as a natural object, but because of the spirit which is supposed to dwell within it. At first fetishes were probably natural objects of such unusual appearance as to attract attention and to suggest supernatural power, such as a strange-looking stone, a stick, a bone, a claw. But in West Africa a fetish is not so much found as *made* by the medicine-man or witch doctor. Between the fetish and its object there need be no organic connection; the spirit may desert the object, and then the object loses its magical power. The fetish has offerings made to it and is prayed to. But if this procedure does not prove efficacious the fetish is coaxed or commanded, or even scolded or whipped. If this, too, proves futile, the savage draws the conclusion

that the spirit has gone, and he throws the object away and seeks for another fetish to take its place. Here, perhaps, is the rudimentary "pragmatism"! A fetish is only sacred so long as it "works," and then it may be thrown on the scrap-heap of discarded futilities. Yet fetishism itself is not discarded, for in place of the abandoned fetish a new one would be adopted. It is obvious that fetishism is a very low form of religion. It has a fairly advanced spiritism for its background, but it is a deviation from the main thoroughfare of religious development into a by-path, a blind alley. It is really more allied to magic than to religion, for the fetish is a private god which the savage seeks to coax and compel to do his bidding. It is retrogressive, debasing, individualistic, capricious.

Passing over this degraded form, we may call the religion of primitive people *polydæmonism*—the worship of many spirits. The whole world is thickly populated by invisible beings who may at any moment make their presence felt to man's advantage or disadvantage. There can be little doubt that the source of the idea is to be found in *dreams*. To people living on this level a dream is as true a representation of reality as the experiences of their waking moments. The only way in which primitive man is able to explain the phenomena of dreams is by thinking of his soul as an intangible, shadowy image of himself which, when he is asleep, wanders away from its home in the body, and returns to it again when he awakes. The only difference between dreams and death is that in

dreams man's spirit leaves its body for a time only, but when he dies it does not return. This view of his own spirit he naturally transfers to other objects around him, animate and inanimate. The spirits which people the world may be divided into three classes (not reckoning fetishes, which we have already put in a class by themselves)—(1) those belonging to natural objects—river and lake, mountain and sea, tree and rock, bird and snake, etc. Not all these objects, however, are worshipped. Animism by itself, as we have seen, does not constitute a religion. It is only when certain spirits are selected out of the untold multitude as beings to be propitiated and prayed to that we have religion. The spirits selected are such as appear to the savage to be possessed of power superior to his own, especially power to do him harm. The savage is especially impressed by such natural objects around him as seem to him strange, uncanny, or even grotesque. (2) The spirits of the dead. The savage has no doubt in his mind that the soul continues to live after death, and that its power for good or evil is greatly enhanced by death. Ancestor-worship is very widely spread throughout the savage world. We have already given reasons for rejecting the view that it is the original form of religion. It seems rather to be a specialised form of spiritism representing an advance on mere Nature-worship. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt of its very great antiquity. It has at any rate the merit of being distinctly social and tends to strengthen the family bond.

(3) The great Nature spirits. The greater objects of Nature, the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth itself, have also their spirits and evoke worship. It seems true that the lesser objects of Nature, those more nearly concerned with their daily wants, occupy the attention of the more primitive peoples far more than the grand, awe-inspiring heavenly bodies. But as the human spirit achieved higher levels, the Nature-spirits on the grand scale came to be worshipped and were elevated into a class above the ordinary world of spirits. Some have maintained that lurking at the back of the savage mind is a conception of a supreme spirit over and above them all. Andrew Lang, in his *Making of Religion* (1898), maintained that while the savage peopled the universe with spirits in accordance with his general animistic outlook, by another channel, through a kind of intuition, he placed an All-Father or Maker of all in the supreme place far above the world of spirits, and not himself envisaged as spirit at all. He goes so far as to say that "certain low savages are as monotheistic as some Christians; they have a Supreme Being."* It is true that the idea of a Great God in the dim background of things is not uncommon among savages. But the idea is not at all a primitive one, and indicates a more or less advanced phase. And even where it exists it is an extremely nebulous idea, and to all intents and purposes does not function in their real life and

* Andrew Lang, *The Making of Religion* (2nd ed., 1900), p. 167.

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thought, nor do they worship this remote being. He is, in the words of an African missionary, "an absentee Deity." Yet the undoubted fact that the idea of a Supreme God is found among many savages (*e.g.*, some West African tribes) proves that the movement towards a monotheistic faith begins vaguely to manifest itself at a very low stage of culture.

The defects of tribal religion are obvious and numerous. It is dominated by fear. The animist feels himself at the mercy of innumerable hostile spirits whom he has to placate. The very multiplicity of these spirits adds to the terror and hinders the unification of life. Tribal religion is narrow and exclusive in the extreme. It absolutely refuses to include within its outlook any but members of the clan or tribe. And even within the tribe religion is in no sense a matter for the individual as such, but only for the tribe regarded as a unit. The religious individual does not exist. Corresponding to this meagre development of the individual life, there is a marked absence of individuality and character in the objects of tribal worship. The spirits cannot yet be called gods, for their personality is dim and undefined. They are shadowy and characterless though powerful beings, in marked contrast to the developed gods of polytheism. There is scarcely anything, not even an individual name, to distinguish one from the other. They have a local habitation, but not a name. They are anonymous beings. They are not nobler and better than men, they are merely more

powerful and cunning. Moral qualities, such as holiness, righteousness, love, are not associated with them in the mind of the savage. The only quality that is associated with them is power, and that power is arbitrary, irresponsible, dangerous. And consequently what is sought of the spirits by prayer and sacrifice is not help to live good lives, but temporal and material blessings such as health, abundance of food, progeny, success in war and in the chase.

Yet in spite of these defects, and the hopeless crudities, puerilities, and ignorance which characterize tribal religion, the sympathetic eye can discover in it the promise and potency of better things. (1) The savage has at any rate a conception of spirit, which, though utterly inadequate to us, is continuous with the more refined conception of spirit held by the cultured man of to-day. E. B. Tylor finishes the first volume of his *Primitive Culture* with the notable words: "The theory of the soul [Animism] is one principal part of a system of religious philosophy, which unites, in an unbroken line of mental connection, the savage fetish-worship and the civilized Christian. The divisions which have separated the great religions of the world into intolerant and hostile sects are for the most part superficial in comparison with the deepest of all religious schisms, that which divides Animism from Materialism." (2) Tribal religion makes for social solidarity and a sense of common obligations. This is especially true of totemism. Loyalty to tribal customs is the root

out of which the ethical spirit developed. Tribal loyalty, though in one sense it makes for conservatism, in another sense is the condition of spiritual progress. It produces in the individual a subordination of desires to social standards. That progress can only come about, however, by the enlarging of the social outlook through the break-up of the tribe and the formation of larger groups and wider loyalties.

II.—National Religion

When a number of tribes are fused together and become a nation, either through the pressure of the fear of a common enemy, or through the conquest of many tribes by a stronger tribe and the consequent assimilation of the weaker by the stronger, there is a great widening of man's mental horizon and a deepening of his life. The development in social organization is accompanied by a corresponding development in religion. It must be borne in mind that the transition to the higher forms of religion which now come under our brief survey was not due to a process of conscious reflection, but rather to the pressure of practical needs coincident with an advance in social organization.

The chief religious development which accompanies the movement from tribal to national life is the movement from polydæmonism to *polytheism*. And this represents a real and important advance. We have seen that tribal religion consists in polydæmonism—the worship of many spirits, which cannot be dignified with the name of gods, because they have no personal history or personal character

or individual names. The change to polytheism consists in the process by which the Nature-spirits came gradually to be anthropomorphized—*i.e.*, to be invested with human passions and faculties and to be addressed like human beings with proper names. This does not mean that the spirits dwelling in stream or tree or cloud or fire or sky were abandoned and their place taken by heavenly beings or gods not worshipped before. It means that the local Nature-spirits themselves were gradually elevated to the status of gods, dwelling in heavenly regions above the world, while yet their original connection with natural objects was not at once forgotten. By degrees, indeed, the ancient association of the gods with natural objects was in very many cases forgotten, and the gods, now ethicized and humanized, became patrons and heads of certain departments of life or of the State, such as war, love, agriculture, art, fate. "We cannot always determine the precise naturalistic origin of a national deity, but sometimes we can do so. For example, it is clear that the Vedic Agni is a fire-god and the Persian Ahura a light-god. The Babylonian Marduk and the Egyptian Ra are sun-gods; the Greek Zeus and the Latin Jupiter are heaven-gods; the Germanic Odin and the Vedic Indra are storm-gods. In these cases the naturalistic basis served as a nucleus around which religious imagination wove the outlines of a personality."* Not all the polytheistic gods, however, were products of this process of anthro-

* G. Galloway, *The Philosophy of Religion* (1914), p. 113.

pomorphizing the spirits of natural objects. The Indian Brahmâ, for instance, originated in the cult and was the apotheosis of sacrificial prayer. Many other well-known instances of anthropomorphic national gods with proper names might be given, such as the Egyptian Osiris, the Greek Apollo, the Latin Mars, the Vedic Varuna, the Indian Vishnu, the Hebrew Yahweh. Once the gods became invested with august personal attributes, it was natural for human thought to elevate them above the world of mortal beings and to place them in a kind of super-world, half material, half spiritual, where together they formed a society of gods and goddesses living lives full of dramatic incidents, mutual jealousies, love affairs, wars, banquets, intrigues (as, for instance, the Greek gods on the summit of Mount Olympus). These stories about the gods are called myths.

And here emerges the question of the origin and meaning of *mythology*. Myths are narratives in which the doings of some god or gods are related. They are the product of the reflections of the immature mind about the gods and their relation to one another, to men, and to the world. Mythology is largely an attempt to give the reason of things, but in the concrete and dramatic forms natural to the imagination rather in the abstract forms of pure thought. It seeks to explain the origin of religious ritual and ceremonies, of agriculture, of civilization, of the world, and the reason for natural phenomena like the dawn and sunset, spring and autumn, rains and storms, etc. In a sense, there-

fore, mythology may be called primitive science or philosophy, in which explanation takes the form of pictures and events, which are enough to satisfy primitive intellectual curiosity. It is as natural for men in the childhood of the race to believe these fables as it is for children to-day to believe in Santa Claus or in fairy tales. The activity of the imagination in mythology is spontaneous, not deliberate, and represents the working of the common consciousness rather than of individual minds working in isolation. Like language and social customs, they are not so much deliberately invented; they *grow*. But they can be combined and embellished at will, for they deal with events which are beyond empirical tests. The imagination, not being subjected to the test of hard fact, is left free to roam at large in the realm of make-believe. This accounts for the luxuriance of mythology among all peoples at the sub-scientific or uncritical stage of culture. We need only mention, as well-known instances, the elaborate mythologies of the Babylonian creation and deluge stories (partly incorporated in the Genesis narratives), of the ancient Vedic hymns in India, and of the Homeric poems in Greece. Yet mythology is not primitive. It only emerges in the period in which organized polytheism is established, though the myth-making tendency was at work before. The spirits of animistic beliefs have no personal history, no proper names, and no distinctive character. Hence no elaborate tales can be told about them, and hence it was not until poly-

dæmonism passed into polytheism that mythology proper began to spring up.

We must not make the mistake of identifying mythology with religion. It is only one element in religion—we may call it the intellectual element, theology in pictures—nor is it the most important or the earliest element. Religion is emotional and practical before it is intellectual; it is a way of feeling and of acting as well as of thinking. But mythology is a way of thinking; it is immature speculation in terms of the free creative imagination. It is therefore early man's poetry and romance as well as his science and philosophy. In fact, no distinction is drawn between what is merely imagined and what is objectively true, between fiction and fact, between fancy and reality. To early man as to the child what is imagined is also true in fact. Mythology is not religion nor the source of it, though it is closely associated with it, even as poetry, philosophy, and theology are not religion, though they are often very closely associated with it. Worship comes before mythology, and there are developments in mythology which are not of religious interest. When the spirit of man begins to outgrow the mythological stage, men do not throw the myths away as worthless. They rather try to interpret them as allegories or parables, having some hidden meaning or conveying some esoteric truth in a symbolic form. The allegorical meaning is a later interpretation, which only arose at a later stage of culture when it came to be felt that the myths,

taken literally, attributed to the gods actions which were irrational, immoral, and even disgusting. We must not think that the original creators of myths regarded them as merely symbolic. The allegorical interpretation is simply the effort of later culture to harmonize them with the developed reason and moral sentiment of its own period. The credulities of one age become poetical metaphors to another. Even Plato, the severe critic of the Homeric myths about the gods, created what he called "myths" of his own to convey truth in symbolic or allegorical form. And myth in the Platonic sense has still great pedagogic value.

Two important movements in the development of national religion must now be briefly sketched—viz., (1) the moralization of the gods, (2) the movement in the direction of monotheism. These two movements prepare the way for universal religion. To these two lines of development must be added a third—the development of specifically religious acts, especially sacrifice and prayer.

1. *The Moralization of the Gods.* — Moral character could not be attributed to the spirits of natural objects. But when the spirits began to be elevated above the level of the natural world and physical forces to a realm more or less supernatural, and when human attributes began to be ascribed to them, then the way became open for more adequate conceptions about the gods, as just and good beings, examples to men of the highest virtues, and guardians of the moral order which rewarded the righteous and punished the un-

righteous. From being purely natural forces on which man was dependent, the gods became ethical powers, patterns of conduct, and protectors of an ethical world-order. They came to stand forth as the champions of the highest values with which men were acquainted. "The transition from the Nature religions to ethical religions," says Höffding, "has rightly been called the most important transition in the history of religion. It is far more significant than that from polytheism to monotheism."* But the antithesis between the two types of religion is not sharp. As Höffding proceeds to say, "even Nature religions have their ethic, for they make definite claims on man. He must show respect and obedience to the divine powers who demand ceremonies and sacrifices in their honour. Men have thus to pass through a course of obedience and self-control. . . . Since the worship of the family, of the clan, or of the nation is shared in by all, it helps to nourish a feeling of solidarity which may acquire ethical significance." But it is only to the extent that moral qualities are attributed to the gods that religion becomes truly ethical. This was a matter of slow development. Here and there we can see the process going on. We know, for instance, how Plato condemned the crude and immoral descriptions of the gods contained in the works of the chief poets of Greece, Homer, Hesiod, and

* H. Höffding, *The Philosophy of Religion* (E. Tr. 1906), p. 325.

Æschylus, with their tales of the battles of the gods, their hostilities, cruelties, lusts. "God is always to be represented such as He is, whether one represents Him in epic, in lyric, or in dramatic poetry. Is not God essentially good, and is He not to be described as such? Yes, without doubt."* "If the gods do aught that is base, they are not gods," wrote Euripedes.

In this process of moralizing the gods certain virtues are frequently associated with certain gods as patterns of such virtues. To give instances from various nationalities, Indra (Vedic), Mars (Latin), Thor (Teutonic) came to be regarded especially as types of valour; Varuna (Vedic) and Osiris (Egyptian) as administrators of justice, Pallas Athene (Greek) as the goddess of wisdom, Hestia (Greek) as the representative of chastity and the domestic virtues, Ahura Mazda, the supreme god of Zarathustraism (Persian) as the champion of light and goodness against the powers of evil and darkness, Zeus (Greek) as the avenger of wrong-doing and the moral regulator of the universe. But it is in the religion of the Old Testament that the moral conception of God reaches its highest point in pre-Christian times. Here, too, the loftiest levels are only arrived at by a gradual process of development, culminating in the teaching of prophets and psalmists. Nothing in literature is more sublime than the descriptions given by these prophets and psalmists of the ethical

* Plato's *Republic*, ii., 18.

perfections of God, His holiness, righteousness, wisdom, compassion, and the glory of His moral government. He is "the high and holy One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy," who yet "dwells with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit" (Isa. lvii. 15), who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity" (Hab. i. 13), who "shall judge the world in righteousness, and minister judgment to the peoples in uprightness" (Ps. ix. 8), who is yet "merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Exod. xxxiv. 6), in whom "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. lxxxv. 10), who is, in a word, the realized ideal of every perfection that the sanctified and inspired imagination of man can picture. But it must be admitted that exalted descriptions of God's moral character are to be found also in the sacred literature of many ancient religions. Yet it was only after long and painful gropings that religious experience, in its finest types, reached these lofty peaks of vision. And the very perfection of goodness attributed to God in the higher religions has forced upon the religious consciousness in ancient and modern times the most acute problem which has ever challenged the religious mind—viz., how to reconcile God's alleged perfection of love and goodness with the apparent imperfection of the world, especially the sin and the suffering that are in it.

2. *The Movement in the Direction of Monotheism.*—The transition from polytheism to monotheism may take one of three forms.*

(*a*) There is a tendency to exalt one god over all the others in the pantheon. The analogy of the social order among men was applied to the relation of the gods to each other. To the monarchy on earth it was thought there corresponded a monarchy in heaven. And so the gods ceased to be thought of as equal, independent, or rival beings, and came to be looked upon as a heavenly hierarchy under the hegemony of one supreme god. Instances of this are: Zeus, "Father of gods and men," among the Greeks; Jupiter among the Romans; Marduk in Babylon; Ashur in Assyria; Tien (Heaven) or Shang Ti (Supreme Lord) in the old religion of the Chinese Empire. Here there is an element of unity in the world of gods and spirits, based on the supremacy of the monarch god. Yet the supreme god is not the Only God. This type of belief may be called *Monarchianism.*

(*b*) The movement towards unification is also seen in what Max Müller has called *Henotheism.* Here, though many gods exist, the worshipper in the act and attitude of devotion concentrates his attention so intensely on one particular deity that that deity seems for the time at least to swell out

* For other ways of approach to monotheism besides these three, see the full treatment in D'Alviella's Hibbert Lectures, *Origin and Growth of the Conception of God* (1892), chap. v.

into a universal power and to absorb all the others. We may, perhaps, without irreverence compare it to the attitude of a devoted lover, who does not deny the existence of other fair maids beside the one that has won his affections, but to whose heart there exists but one, all the others being negligible, at least as long as he remains in that mood. It is an attitude of piety rather than of theoretic belief, of the heart rather than of the head. It is in ancient Vedic literature that Max Müller discovered this tendency. At one time it may be the goddess Aditi, at another time the god Varuna or the god Mitra, to whom are ascribed the greatest cosmical functions, and all other gods for the time being fall into the background. But after the intensity of the devotional feeling has passed by, the god who then seemed to represent the totality of things appears again merely as one among many gods. The tendency is seen in other religions besides the Vedic. The ancient Egyptian, for instance, in turn elevated Ra, Osiris, Ptah, Ammon, and others to the position of the supreme God.

(*c*) Another form of the movement from the many to the one is the speculative tendency to reduce all the gods to modes or appearances of a single divine substance. This leads to *Pantheism* rather than to monotheism proper. In ancient Egypt we find statements to the effect that the sun-god is the soul of all the gods. "I am the maker of heaven and of earth. . . . It is I who have given to all the gods the soul which is within them. . . . I am Chepera in the morning, Ra

at noon, Tmu in the evening." In India this tendency is seen in many of the Vedic hymns. In them occurs the oft-quoted lines, "O Agni, thou art born Varuna, thou becomest Mitra when kindled; all the gods are in thee," and "They have called him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni; that which is one the sages call by many names." Later on, in the Upanishads, this tendency is developed into an elaborate pantheism. Brahmă or the Absolute becomes the only reality, and the finite world of "many" objects is mere *maya*, illusion, a mere appearance in which the "one" masks itself. The multiplicity of gods, as of all other things, was resolved into the unity of Being or Substance. But the pantheism of India is still tolerant of polytheism for the practical purposes of popular worship. Among the Greeks the pantheistic tendency was developed mainly by the philosophers, Xenophanes, Parmenides, and the Stoics. In his revolt against the anthropomorphic polytheism of Greek religion Xenophanes rose to the conception of absolute unity which cannot be the object of sensuous imagination. To the Stoics God was pantheistically conceived as the soul of the universe, the immanent reason or logos pervading all things.

(*d*) It is in the religion of Israel alone that monotheism reached its full development. In pagan religions the monotheistic faith never became more than an occasional flash of insight in the minds of a few gifted men. It failed to establish itself as the religion of a people. Zara-

thustra in Persia was on the verge of monotheism, but his successors brought back the gods whom he had banished, and hymns to them are found in the Zend-Avesta. Plato is undoubtedly monotheistic in his higher moments, but he constantly uses the language of Greek polytheism out of respect to tradition. Greek philosophy was too deficient in religious dynamic to reform the popular religion and establish monotheism. Even in Israel we have not monotheism in the strict sense from the beginning. It is true that from the beginning of their national life Yahweh alone was *worshipped* by at least the teachers and leaders of the people. But the real existence of the gods of other nations was not denied. The Moabites had their god Chemosh, the Ammonites their Moloch, the Zidonians their Baal, etc. Yet Yahweh alone was the God with whom Israel had to do. He alone had a claim upon their allegiance and value to their religious experience. To worship other gods was to be guilty of high treason, not because they were non-existent, but because Yahweh alone was the God of Israel. This is not monotheism, but *monolatry*. But from the days of Amos the leaders of the people taught more and more clearly that the moral and providential government of Yahweh extended far beyond the confines of Israel, and, indeed, unto the uttermost parts of the earth, in such a sense that there was no longer room in the universe for any other god. The clearest and sublimest expression of pure monotheism is to be found in Deutero-Isaiah (*e.g.*, Isa. xlv. 6). Henceforth the

belief in the unity and universal sovereignty of God is the pillar and foundation of the Jewish faith. This, together with the lofty conception of God's moral character—in a word, ethical monotheism—is the chief contribution of the Jewish nation to the world's spiritual heritage.

3. *The Development of Specifically Religious Acts, especially Sacrifice and Prayer.*—The history of religion is not only the history of the development of *beliefs* about gods, but also of the *acts* by means of which men sought to establish harmonious relations with the gods. Religion is never a matter of holding otiose views about the divine nature. Fundamentally it is a matter of entering into friendly relationship with the deities, culminating in fellowship, self-denial, and service. We must here make some reference to the two chief means of establishing, maintaining, or restoring such a relation. Of course, the beginnings of sacrifice and of prayer go back to tribal or primitive religion. But in national or polytheistic religions a marked development is seen in the modes of worship, which now assume a more fixed and elaborate form and take on a deeper significance.

(*a*) *Sacrifice.*—The origin, meaning, and development of sacrifice are matters which are yet much in dispute. The following may be offered as a meagre and tentative sketch. Four attitudes may be distinguished in sacrificial observances. We begin with the simpler and advance to the more complex, and it is probable (though by no means certain) that the order we give will also represent

the successive steps in the historical development of the sacrificial system. First comes the attitude of *gratitude* to the gods for favours received. This is represented in the thank-offering, generally in the form of the sacrifice of firstfruits, offered as a spontaneous expression of man's sense of dependence on higher beings from whom he derives the indispensable things of life, such as food and drink. This survives amongst us in the form of "grace before meat" and of the "harvest thanksgiving service" (in the latter the fruits and flowers with which the church is adorned are obviously a survival of the idea of firstfruits offered to God). But this attitude of thanksgiving passes easily into that of *bargaining* with the gods, by the offering to them of *gifts* whereby they may be induced to bestow a boon in return. How easy is the transition from gratitude to the spirit of bargaining may be seen in the way the Basutos express themselves when they offer the firstfruits, "Thank you, gods, give us bread to-morrow also," which reminds us of Dr. Johnson's famous definition of "gratitude" as "a lively sense of favours to come." The attitude of bargaining, or *quid pro quo*, was tersely expressed in the classical phrases, Δῶρα θεοὺς πείθει and "do ut des." Plato unreservedly condemns this attitude, holding that it reduces worship into a sort of commercial artifice (ἐμπορικὴ τέχνη) between gods and men, and protests that God "cannot be seduced by presents like a villainous money-lender."* Yet the giving of gifts to God may express a sincere desire to

* See Adam, *Religious Teachers of Greece*, p. 44.

secure His blessing and favour in no ignoble sense. A third type of sacrifice expresses the craving for *participation or communion* with a deity. In the sacrificial meal, shared by the god and his worshippers, the bond of fellowship with the deity is realized. And the worshipper might not only eat *with* the god, he might even eat the god, and thus a more intimate relation would be effected by partaking of the very stuff of the deity. Robertson Smith, in his *Religion of the Semites*, maintained that sacrifice consisted originally in slaying the animal of the totem-group and partaking of it in a common meal, which meant that divine virtue passed into the recipient in the act of eating. But this theory of the origin of sacrifice assumes that religion had its source in totemism and that religion everywhere passed through the totemistic stage, a view which we have already given reasons for rejecting. Yet there can be no doubt that in many quarters the conception of sacrifice as consisting of "eating the god" did prevail, as, for instance, in the Orphic cult of the Thracian Dionysus. Is not even the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Lord's Supper (transubstantiation) a refined scholastic form of this conception? The fourth type of sacrifice expresses the desire for *reconciliation* with the gods, the offering being regarded as an act of *propitiation* or *atonement*.* Something in men's conduct has given offence to the gods and caused

* In view of the prominence of fear in primitive religion, we ought perhaps to regard propitiation as the most primitive form of sacrifice, and to place it first instead of last of the four types.

them to withhold their favour. Some sacrificial act is necessary in order to restore the harmonious relation which has been lost. The idea of vicarious offering to atone for sin is found in many, if not most, religions. It often takes a crude and repulsive form, even in highly developed religions and theologies, but it is also capable of high spiritual development. In pre-Christian times the profoundest expression of the principle of vicarious sacrifice is to be found in the picture of the Suffering Servant of Yahweh in Deutero-Isaiah (esp. Isa., chap. liii.), where the substitution of voluntary *human* sacrifice for that of unwilling beasts elevates the sacrificial idea to a new ethical plane and brings it into far more vital relation to human life. To Christian thought and experience the Cross of Christ is the perfect fulfilment of the principle of vicarious sacrifice faintly adumbrated in the widely prevalent sacrificial systems of the world.

When there is a deepening of the ethical side of religion, the inadequacy of any external method of propitiation becomes apparent. "I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings," said the prophet Hosea (vi. 6). "The perfume comes not from the grain [of the sacrifice]; it is purity and virtue that make it," wrote Confucius. Yet the principle of sacrifice must remain, however sublimated. "I appeal to you," wrote Paul, "to dedicate your bodies as a living sacrifice, consecrated and acceptable to God; that is your cult, a spiritual rite" (Rom. xii. 1, Moffatt's translation).

(*b*) *Prayer.*—Prayer in some form or other is as universal as religion. So characteristic is prayer of the religious attitude that Sabatier takes it to be the very essence of religion. "Religion," he declares, "is the prayer of the heart." "It is prayer which distinguishes religious phenomena from all those which resemble them or lie near them, from the moral sense, for instance, or æsthetic feeling." "From this point of view, perhaps a history of prayer would be the best history of the religious development of mankind."* The evolution of prayer may be traced along two lines—first, the *method* of prayer as distinguished from the spell, and, second, its *objects*. The *method* of the genuine prayer is essentially distinct from that of the spell; it is the method of appeal, of moral suasion; it is therefore marked by humility and reverence, whereas the spell is magical, uses the method of command and constraint, and is marked by a spirit of self-confidence and self-sufficiency. But though logically the distinction is clear, in practice they interpenetrate, most of all in primitive religion, but also to some extent even in the higher religions. The evolution of religion is largely the process by which prayer is gradually extricated from the magical spell, a process which is never wholly complete, but which has ever advanced *pari passu* with the development of man's ethical and rational consciousness. The other line of progress lies in

* A. Sabatier, *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion* (E. Tr. 1906), pp. 27 *f.*

the gradual spiritualizing of prayer as to its objects or content. In the primitive period prayer can be nothing more than a petition for material blessings. This finds its place in the higher religions, too, and is represented in the "Lord's Prayer" in the clause "Give us this day our daily bread." According to E. B. Tylor, we never find among the lower cultures prayers of native origin which ask for moral good, such as forgiveness or help to live good lives.* But there is a gradual reaching forth of human aspiration towards moral and spiritual blessings, and a movement of the spirit beyond the level of petition for special blessings to that of submission to the Divine Will and of fellowship with God. There is an increasing emphasis on purity of heart and on concentration of thought and purpose as essential conditions of true prayer. The Japanese god of learning, Temmangu, declares through his oracle: "All ye who come before me hoping to attain the accomplishment of your desires, pray with hearts pure from falsehood, clean within and without, reflecting the truth like a mirror." And Plato, in the *Phædrus*, represents Socrates as praying: "Beloved Pan, and all ye other gods that haunt this place, give me beauty in the inward soul, and may the outward and the inward man be at one. May I think the wise man rich. Give me so much gold as only the temperate man can bear." There is ever a danger for prayer

* E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. ii, pp. 364 *ff*. *Cf*. L. R. Farnell, *The Evolution of Religion* (1905), p. 183.

to become a stereotyped form of words regarded as having by the mere repetition of them a magical efficiency constraining the powers that be to execute one's own will. But the highest form of prayer is not an attempt to cast a spell over the Almighty or to dictate terms to God, but the expression of a desire to be in tune with the Infinite and for a fuller realization of God's will on earth.

III.—Universal Religion

In the preceding section we have been dealing with religion at the stage of its evolution where the religious group is identical with the nation (though we have not always kept strictly within this boundary). Religion at this stage is just an aspect of the national life, a department of the State. It has to do with the individual only in a secondary way. It is not so much a matter of individual choice or personal conviction as a matter of loyalty to the State and of conformity to national customs. A man does not choose his own religion any more than he chooses the place of his birth or the language of his daily converse. Moreover, national religions show but little tendency to extend beyond their native boundaries, at least by means of deliberate propaganda or persuasion. If the national boundaries are extended through victory in war, then the boundaries of the religion are extended likewise. The conquered, as a matter of course, adopt the religion of the conqueror, though the worship of the old gods will probably survive in the form of superstitious practices or

unofficial religion, or else be assimilated into the new worship. But there is nothing in the nature of a deliberate missionary movement. All the religions of the civilized world, ancient and modern, belong to this class, with the exception of the three great universal or missionary religions, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, which claim to have a message of value to all mankind and have spread far beyond the confines of their native land.

Universalism in religion did not, however, blossom forth suddenly and without preparation. A tendency in the direction of universal religion is seen within some of the national religions themselves. Striking instances of this are found in the *Mystery Religions* that flourished in the Græco-Roman world from the sixth century B.C. to about the third century A.D., and in the teaching of the great prophets of Israel from the eighth to the sixth centuries B.C. In the Græco-Roman world, in proportion as the old public cults of the civic and national deities fell into disrepute and failed to satisfy men's deepest spiritual cravings, their place came to be filled more and more by mystery cults open only to those who voluntarily underwent certain elaborate preliminary preparations. Some of the more important of them were of foreign origin, such as the cult of Cybele and Attis, which originated in Phrygia, the cult of Serapis and Isis, which found its way into Europe from Egypt, and the cult of Mithra, which came from Persia. They were attempts to give a more emotional and ecstatic expression to religious

aspiration than the public ceremonies provided, and their chief purpose was to secure for their votaries a mystic union with some deity and a guarantee of blissful immortality. None but the initiated could be present at the ritual, and knowledge of what transpired was scrupulously kept from outsiders. Yet the Mysteries were not secret societies in a narrow sense, for they were open to all who chose to be initiated (except barbarians and criminals). They thus stood in marked contrast to the old civic and national cults, which were confined to the citizens of a State or a city. They substituted the principle of initiation for the more exclusive principle of birthright or nationality, and so foreshadowed the disintegration of the old barriers and prepared the way for the universal religion. They were based on the voluntary principle and disregarded national boundaries. Thus the mystery cults strangely combined a strict exclusiveness (on the basis of initiation) with a kind of incipient catholicity.

In Israel, under the tutorship of great prophets like Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the "Second Isaiah," religion became less a matter of national ritual and more a matter of inner conviction and personal experience. With them the personal element entered into religion in a way which may be said to be revolutionary. One of the greatest "transvaluation of values" in the whole history of religion is that made by Jeremiah when he declared that God was about to make a "new covenant" with His people. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts"

(Jer. xxxi. 31-34). When religion is a matter of internal state of mind and heart, and not a matter of birthright or external ritual, it is already incipiently universal. If the conditions of the covenant between God and men are inner and ethical, then it is open to all who are prepared to conform to these conditions. Jeremiah does not draw this conclusion, for his thought still turns within the circle of the House of Israel, but it is implicit in the nature of the new covenant. Side by side with the idea of the inwardness of religion there grew up in Israel the idea that Yahweh was the God not of Israel alone, but of the whole world, a truth which is implied in monotheism. He will judge the people of Assyria and of Babylon as well as the people of Israel. He is indeed the Creator and Ruler of the whole universe. Later on the Jews lost sight almost completely of these larger visions, and the Judaism of the post-exilic period retreated into a narrow particularism. Thus the religion of Israel prepared the way for the universalism of Christianity, but remained itself a national religion.

Buddhism was the first religion to proclaim a way of redemption to all men as men, and thus to break down the barriers of class and nationality. Just as Christianity sprang from the bosom of Judaism, so Buddhism sprang by way of reform or revolt from Brahmanism, a most exclusive religious system characterized by a highly elaborate ritual, asceticism, and pantheistic speculation. It is a significant fact that the three great missionary

religions owe their origin to great historical personalities, in contrast to the vast majority of religions, which have no known founders. Buddhism sprang from the impressive teaching and personality of Gautama the Buddha (=the Enlightened), who flourished in North India during the latter half of the sixth century B.C. Gautama was profoundly impressed by the prevalence of suffering in the world, and meditated deeply on the meaning of suffering and the escape from it. His troubled soul only attained peace when he learned to regard the world as a great illusion (*maya*), produced and fostered by lust, impulse, and passion, and when it dawned upon him that the root of all suffering is desire and that therefore the way of salvation is the suppression of all desire.

This discovery of a way of salvation open to all who are prepared to fulfil its conditions is one of the greatest turning-points in the history of religious development. But it will be noticed that it is not redemption from sin that is here contemplated, but redemption from sorrow. When all passion and desire—including the desire to live—are eradicated, man enters into *nirvana*, the state of absolute detachment and peace in which the flame of self-consciousness has "gone out" for want of fuel, just as a fire goes out when no more fresh fuel is put on to maintain it. Strictly speaking, *nirvana* is not annihilation in the sense that the "soul" ceases to be. For how can that which never had existence cease to be? Along with other ontological conceptions of the Brahmanic

philosophy, Buddha rejected the idea of a substantial soul or self (in a way which reminds us of Hume). The so-called soul is merely an illusion. Man is nothing but a bundle of desires. A man *is* only what he *does*. The only reality is the Law of the Deed, or *karma*, which secures that what a man sows in act or desire, that will he also reap, not only within his present lifetime, but in a countless series of lifetimes as long as acting or desiring lasts. Even after death he will be reborn into another form of existence, and so the suffering which is involved in all conscious existence will be perpetuated. Thus, while there is no soul, there is yet an unbroken continuity of rebirths as long as any desire or craving is left—*i.e.*, the constituents of consciousness will again come together after death to form a new individual, psychologically, if not ontologically, continuous with the old. And so the wheel of sorrowful existence rotates endlessly. This is the doctrine of *samsâra*, wandering, transmigration. But Buddha came with a message of hope for all men. He offered the prospect of escape from the dreary wheel of existence. By quenching the flame of desire the remorseless law of *karma* would be transcended, and man would lose himself in the eternal silence of *nirvana*. This is the universal gospel, the way of release (*moksha*) for all men who choose to avail themselves of it.

It is noteworthy that the gods have neither part nor place in this plan of salvation. Buddha was no theoretic atheist, but he ignored the gods. He had no interest in the Brahmanic speculations con-

cerning Brahmă or the Absolute, and no use for the gods of Brahmanic and popular theology. They could give no assistance to man in his efforts to escape the wheel of being, for they themselves were, like men, victims of that wheel. Buddha taught most emphatically that every man must work out his own salvation, and that no divine power availed him. Worship is useless and prayer an empty form. Buddha's teaching is religious only in that it proclaimed a way of salvation. Many would say that it can only be called religion by courtesy. It had no ritual, and gods had no function in its way of salvation. *Karma* is not the expression of the will of a god or gods. It is impersonal, and works by a kind of blind necessity. And just as it is not made by the gods, so they are impotent to unmake it or to release man from its chains. But though the teaching of Buddha was non-religious, godless, Buddhism as a great historic religion is theistic, or rather polytheistic. The need for help in the struggle of life and the tendency to turn for assistance to some superhuman power are too strongly entrenched in human nature to be uprooted. No system that seeks to eradicate the impulse to prayer and worship can succeed. It is this fact that transformed Buddha's esoteric system of life into one of the great religions of the world. Even Buddha himself, who sought to divert his disciples from the worship of any god, came to be conceived, under the stress of pious affection and the need of spiritual help, as a divine being, a manifestation of the Eternal, who for the

sake of suffering humanity from time to time condescended to seem to be born and to die. Buddhism as a religion is thus based on a principle which Buddha himself had rejected. Yet the influence of Buddha's original teaching remains. The ideal of Buddhism is still a peace of soul which is as profound as a dreamless sleep, as perfect as the peace of death.

The second of the universal religions in the chronological order of their origin is *Christianity* The reader will not judge the importance we attach to Christianity by the amount of space we give to it in this volume. Being the religion with which we are all most familiar, a very considerable knowledge of its origin, history, and characteristics may here be taken for granted. We must rest content with a brief comparison of Christianity with Buddhism. In spite of the marked contrast between them, they have some elements in common. Both are missionary religions, universalistic in character and appeal, claiming to transcend all boundaries of caste, social position, nationality, and race. "My law is a law of redemption for all," says Buddha. "One is your Father, and ye are all brethren," says Christ. Both are redemptive religions, offering a way of salvation to all. The two systems assign a lower place in the scale of values to the material than to the spiritual and seek to emancipate man from bondage to the material, the visible, the finite. "What shall it profit a man," says Christ, "if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The ethics

both of Buddha and of Christ alike lay great emphasis on compassion, forgiveness, and brotherhood. Each religion assigns a place of supreme importance to the personality of its founder. The heart of Buddhism is Buddha, the soul of Christianity is Christ. And yet the contrast between these two systems is deeper and more basic than their points of resemblance. The Christ of the New Testament as mediator of salvation occupies a far more important place in the life of believers than does the Buddha of primitive Buddhism. Christ is Himself the Saviour of men, who mediates divine forgiveness, redemption, and grace to all who believe in Him, whereas Buddha throws men on their own resources and repudiates the claim to be their saviour (except in so far as his teaching enables them to discover the way whereby they may save themselves). Addressing his favourite disciple, Buddha dwelt on his own weakness and added: "O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge unto yourselves. Betake yourself to no external refuge. Hold fast to the truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the truth. Look not for refuge to any one but yourselves." In contrast to these words, the words of Jesus come to our minds: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "I am the light of the world." "I am the way, the truth, and the life." But the most fundamental point of contrast between the two religions lies in their different conceptions of the nature of evil and of salvation from evil. In

Buddhism the root-evil is suffering, and inasmuch as to exist is to suffer, then existence itself is the evil from which man needs to be saved. But in Christianity evil is essentially moral, it is not sorrow but sin. Salvation in the former is negative; it consists in detaching oneself from every kind of positive relation to the external world—the whole finite world being a mere bubble, a mirage, an illusion—and so ultimately in emptying the subjective life of all content until the subject itself is dissolved (for there can be no subject without an object). There is a negative aspect to Christian salvation, too, represented in such phrases as "crucifying the flesh with the passions and lusts thereof" (Gal. v. 24), "if any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross" (Matt. xvi. 24). But the negative process has a positive purpose—viz., the enhancement and enrichment of the spiritual life. "For whosoever shall lose his life for My sake shall find it" (Matt. xvi. 25). "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly" (John x. 10). Here the ideal is dying to live, self-realization through self-sacrifice. It is true that the repressive and ascetic aspects of Christianity have often been emphasized at the expense of the positive and expansive. But we fail to appreciate the true genius of the Christian religion unless we realize that its ideal is not the paralysing of the human will, but the sanctifying and ennobling of it so that it may be an effective instrument of the Kingdom of God. The salvation of Buddhism

is deliverance from struggle, that of Christianity victory in struggle. The dominant idea in Christ's teaching was the Kingdom of God, which, whatever else may be said of it, is a social ideal, and means the recognition of God's rule in all human life. The Buddhistic ideal is the Sangha, the monastic Order, which is based on an individualistic view of salvation. The difference has been well summed up by Höffding in the words, "Buddha 'softened' Asia, but Jesus taught Europe a great Excelsior."*

The youngest of the universal religions is *Islâm*, founded by the prophet Mohammed (born in Mecca about the year A.D. 570). Though the latest of the three, Islâm is far less universalistic in spirit than the other two. It has retained its original Semitic and even Arabic character throughout the ages, and has not the power to expand and adapt itself to indefinite varieties of cultures and races. It is a static religion, inflexible, unchangeable, a religion of precise and immutable rules, lacking the marvellous adaptability of Christianity. Yet in spite of its rigidity, it must be classed with the universal religions in virtue of its missionary (or rather proselytising) zeal and widespread success in propaganda. It makes no distinction between Arabian believers and converts of other nationalities. It is in some respects the least original of the world's great religions. It is little less than an amalgam of certain aspects of Judaism

* Höffding, *Philosophy of Religion* (E. Tr. 1906), p. 311.

and an ill-understood and degenerate Christianity. Owing to its comparative simplicity, it may seem better adapted to the minds of peoples of low culture than the Christian faith, but it would require more boldness than knowledge to assert that it excels Christianity in its conception of God or as an incentive to social and intellectual progress. Its merit lies in its strong insistence on the unity and sovereignty of God and its uncompromising hostility to all forms of polytheism and idolatry. "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet." But its conception of God is severely deistic. The Islâmic God is a magnified Oriental despot, arbitrary and irresponsible, the Sultan of heaven. Very great emphasis falls on His absolute omnipotence. His will is the all-determining power within and without the universe. Men are the slaves of Allah, his absolute property. The very word "Islâm" means submission to God's will. God is apt to be regarded as an arbitrary and incomprehensible Fate against which it is futile to rebel. Neither holiness nor love is included among His attributes. Yet there have been Moslems not satisfied with this hard creed. The mystical schools which have prevailed within Islâm testify to a craving for a more intimate communion with a living and loving God.

Chapter V — *The Nature of Religion, and its Relation to Other Activities*

IN the preceding chapter we endeavoured to outline the historical evolution of religion with a minimum of philosophical interpretation. We tried to give as objective a view as possible of religion in history. Brief though our outline has necessarily been, it has probably made two things evident. First, that religion has manifested itself in a baffling variety of forms, including much that is crude, futile and ignoble, as well as much that is noble, idealistic, and conducive to human well-being. Second, that through the apparent chaos of rites, beliefs, superstitions, sects, we are able quite clearly to trace a line of progress, or rather the achievement of progress in religion *as a whole*, or at selected points—for the progress is not linear, or uniform and universal, but the resultant of many tendencies in diverse directions—arrested development or even retrogression here being more than compensated for by a progressive movement there. Thus, while animism, fetishism, and totemism still prevail in many parts of the world, yet among peoples of the higher cultures these crude faiths have been left far behind and faiths of a loftier, more rational and spiritual kind have emerged, and thus there has been marked progress on the whole. Of course this progress of religion has not been something in isolation from other aspects of life, but has proceeded *pari passu* with the progress of

culture and social organization generally, partly as the cause and partly as the effect of the wider movement. In speaking of progress in religion we evidently assume that there exists some criterion or ground of valuation by which we may determine what is lower and what is higher in the scale, why, for instance, we regard polytheism as higher than animism and monotheism higher than polytheism. Our criterion will depend on our definition of religion. A religion stands high in the scale in proportion as it fulfils the true meaning and function of religion.

This leads us to the question of the definition of religion. What essentially is religion? Can we find a unity of meaning in the multitudinous mass of phenomena we have surveyed? Is it possible to disentangle the constitutive, essential, abiding element of religion from its accidental and ever-varying features? If such an element can be found —a permanent, common element in all religions as such—it will furnish us with a *descriptive* definition of religion in all its stages. Can we go still further and discover, on the basis of a descriptive definition, a *normative* definition? That is, can we extract from the religious experience itself a norm or criterion by which to decide what the ideal of religion is, and evaluate all religions in the light of that ideal? To succeed in such an enterprise would mean the discovery of unity in multiplicity and of progress within continuity. In pursuing this inquiry it will be difficult for us to avoid reasoning in a circle—*i.e.*, to avoid using

our norm to guide us in our description of the common element as well as using the common element to guide us in our search for the norm. It may, however, be some gain if at the outset we draw clearly the distinction between the descriptive and the normative definition, even though we may not always keep them apart. It may be doubted whether in our actual reasoning we ever quite avoid the "circle," except when our reasoning is purely formal, sterile, and pedantic.

The problem of the essential nature of religion may be approached in two ways. We may ask what religion is in itself, without reference to anything other than itself. And then we may seek to elucidate its inner nature by defining its relations to other forms of activity or types of behaviour. Where exactly is the dividing line between religion and the non-religious or secular aspects of life? And how especially is it to be distinguished from certain forms of life and culture that seem most akin to it, such as morality, art, science, philosophy?

I.

Religion in history has had such diverse and even contradictory meanings that any attempt to express its essential character seems foredoomed to failure. This is especially true in view of the perplexing changes and evolutions through which it has passed. A growing and dynamic thing is much more difficult to define than that which is relatively constant and static. Yet surely religion has some

characteristics which are universal and unique, otherwise the word "religion" would have no assignable meaning. In dealing with "the *varieties* of religious experience" we are still dealing with "*religious* experience," something specific and definable if the word has any meaning at all. There must be some kind of religion in general to which all particular religions and all types of religious experience are organic. But when we inquire more closely what the universal and unique element or principle is, we find ourselves confronted with a great variety of opinions. The attempts to define religion have been many and varied. There is probably an element of conscious exaggeration in the statement once made by John Morley that "there are said to be ten thousand definitions of religion." But how numerous and varied they are is sufficiently exemplified in the excellent classified selection of them given by Professor Leuba in the Appendix to his *Psychological Study of Religion* (pp. 339-361). A brief reference to some of the more famous and representative theories of the nature of religion may here be useful. They all, it will be seen, contain an element of truth, but they are apt to be one-sided and to err in the direction of over-simplifying the complex phenomenon we are studying.

Some definitions restrict religion too much to one aspect of the psychical nature of man. Of these some make religion a matter of the intellect. To Hegel, for instance, religion is a kind of

popular philosophy; it is truth conceived in concrete, pictorial, metaphorical forms, while philosophy proper is the same truth stripped of its sensuous clothing and interpreted in terms of pure thought. Religion, he declares, is "the knowledge possessed by the finite mind of its nature as absolute mind," or as he elsewhere puts it, looking at the matter from the divine side, it is "the Divine Spirit's knowledge of itself through the mediation of the finite spirit." It is thus a form of knowledge, the knowledge of the Absolute Idea or absolute knowledge, involving the ultimate unity of the finite and the infinite. Hegelian descriptions of religion, with their stress on logical unity, system, coherence, obscure the valuational attitude which is so characteristic of religious experience. Others beside Hegelian philosophers have made religion to consist essentially of a kind of belief, such as E. B. Tylor in his famous "minimum definition of religion" as "the belief in spiritual beings," and Max Müller in his view of religion as a "perception" or "apprehension" of the Infinite.

Others again define religion in terms of feeling or emotion. The most influential of all such definitions is the famous formula of Schleiermacher, "The essence of religion consists in a feeling of absolute dependence on God." According to Schleiermacher pure religion is pure feeling—*i.e.*, feeling disconnected from thought on the one hand, and from morality or action on the other. "Religion has nothing to do with know-

ledge; quite apart from it, its nature can be known." "It matters not what conceptions a man adheres to, he can still be pious." "Ideas and principles are all foreign to religion. If ideas and principles are to be anything, they must belong to knowledge, which is a different department of life from religion." It is equally distinct from morality. "While morality shows itself as manipulating, as self-controlling, piety appears as a surrender, a submission, to be moved by the Whole that stands over against man. Morality depends entirely on the consciousness of freedom. . . . Piety, on the contrary," moves "in the opposite sphere of necessity." Thus "piety takes its place alongside of science and practice as a necessary, an indispensable third . . . not less in worth and splendour than either."* Religion, then, is a warm, intimate, immediate awareness of the Infinite in the finite, the Eternal in the temporal, a sense of dependence on the Whole. Schleiermacher rendered great service to religion by saving it from barren intellectualism on the one hand and bare moralism on the other, and by revealing it in its mystic inwardness as immediate awareness of God. We have already emphasised the centrality of feeling in religious experience, and doubtless Schleiermacher was right in saying that "quantity of knowledge is not quantity of piety." But two

* To realize the full force of these short quotations, they should be read in their contexts. See the selections from Schleiermacher in Caldecott and Mackintosh's *Selections from the Literature of Theism* (1904), pp. 256-304.

criticisms at once suggest themselves. First, the feeling element in religion can never be *mere* feeling. The feeling must have some idea-content, and the feeling cannot be so divorced from the idea as to make the former essential and the latter non-essential. The life of feeling develops beyond itself into thought and action, the whole forming one indivisible movement. Religious feeling cannot be separated from its object or intellectual content, or from the behaviour which is its outward expression. Second, the feeling of *dependence*, which Schleiermacher regarded as distinctively religious, is found in secular life as well, and is even prominent in the domestic animals, and therefore cannot be fastened on to discriminate between the religious and the non-religious types of experience. Moreover, to speak of the feeling of dependence on *God* or the Infinite is to give the feeling an idea-content, however vague, and so to concede the point that religion cannot be pure feeling to which ideas are "foreign."

Others, again, have defined religion in terms of the moral will, practically identifying the religious with the moral consciousness. The classical instance of this in philosophy is Kant's definition of religion as "the recognition of all our duties as divine commandments." A popular variation of this, but with the addition of an undefined emotion (which Kant rigorously excluded) is found in Matthew Arnold's dictum: "Religion is morality touched with emotion." We shall presently discuss the relation of morality to religion. It is

enough here to say that while they are cognate and closely related experiences, they are not to be identified. In Kant's conception of religion, there is no room left for the mystic experience of fellowship with God, prayer, worship, reverence, which are so characteristic of religious experience. As against the partial truth of all the above-mentioned definitions, we must bear in mind that religion does not merely occupy a part of man's nature, but is the reaction of his whole being to what he regards as superior beings (or a Superior Being) on whom his destiny depends. This we have already insisted on in our discussion of the psychology of religion.

Coming to more recent attempts at defining the essence of religion, we may begin by referring to the remarkable definition given by M. Salomon Reinach. Religion, he declares, "implies a limitation, without any material constraint, of individual volition, or rather of human activity as far as this depends on volition. As there are a great many religions, so there are a great many limitations, and I propose to define religion as: *A sum of scruples which impede the free exercise of our faculties.*" This, he asserts, is "the irreducible basis of all religions." He proceeds to say that the "scruples" which he has in mind are those of a special kind, which he calls *taboos*, namely such scruples as are of a purely irrational and arbitrary kind.* The feature of this definition is that it fastens on the negative aspect of religion—namely,

* Salomon Reinach, *Orpheus* (E. Tr. 1909), p. 3.

its restrictions and prohibitions, and even those restrictions which are not inspired by any practical reasons. Such limitations as "impede the free exercise of our faculties" are made to be the very essence of all religion. But surely to reduce all religion into a system of taboos is to reveal an appalling lack of insight into the real meaning of what it is sought to define. It is true that restrictions, often arbitrary and irrational, have filled a large place in the religious life, especially on its lowest levels. But even in primitive societies taboos could only survive in so far as they were believed to contribute to the positive needs of life and helped men in the struggle for existence. Primitive taboos have undergone a process of rationalization and selection, and only those are retained which experience has shown to subserve useful purposes. It is true that irrational restrictions have been a barrier to progress, and that even in the higher religions a disproportionate emphasis has often been laid on repressive commands. But the true function of religion has been to transform necessary restrictions into freedom and joy and thus to subordinate the negative element to positive ends. "He that loseth his life shall find it." "I came that ye may have life, and have it abundantly." So far from impeding the free exercise of our faculties, religion contributes more and more to fulness of life, self-realization, expansion of personality. Those who regard religion as essentially a means of satisfying the hunger for life and for self-expression are nearer

the mark than those who define it in terms of self-contraction, inhibition, soul-paralysis. Even if Reinach's definition could be accepted as a *description* of religion on its lowest levels, it can certainly not be accepted as a normative definition.

More likely to lead us to the heart of the matter, and more in accord with the functional point of view which we emphasized in a previous chapter, are the recent attempts to define religion *in terms of the idea of value*. These have a certain affinity with the attempts to define it in terms of feeling. But the idea of value is richer and more significant than the "pure feeling" of Schleiermacher, and it brings out more clearly the purposive factor in experience. The idea of value is fundamental in modern thought. It is really implied in Plato's doctrine of the Good as the Supreme Idea. But in its modern form it is derived from Kant, who in a famous passage declared that the "good will" is "good without qualification, . . . shining like a jewel by its own light, as something which has its whole value in itself," and so laid down the principle of absolute worth or value, upon which he built his theory of the moral order of persons as a "kingdom of ends." The distinction which Kant thus drew between the world of persons or wills as a "kingdom of ends," and the physical world of causal and quantitative relations as the "kingdom of nature" has proved profoundly suggestive. The idea of "ends," however, is too abstract apart from the human "values" or satisfactions which the realizing of those ends is meant

to secure. And so, through the influence mainly of Herbart, Lotze, and Ritschl, the idea of value has become dominant in recent philosophical discussions, and the difference between the attitude of explanation and that of valuation has become a commonplace. Lotze connected the process of valuation with feeling (which Kant had rigorously excluded). "What we mean by *value* in the world," he wrote, "lies wholly in the *feeling* of *satisfaction* or of *pleasure* we experience from it."* But, while recognizing the importance of feeling, we would suggest that the idea of value should be related, not to the mere pleasure or pain feeling, regarded as something passive, but to man's organized desires and active purposes—*i.e.*, to conation. In the words of Dr. Pringle-Pattison, "the supreme values are those which represent the realization of our most sustained purposes and the satisfaction of our deepest and most permanent desires."†

The bearing of the idea of values on the theory of reality will be discussed later. At present we are concerned not with the theory of reality but with the nature of religion. The first instance of a definition of religion construed wholly from the standpoint of values is that of Harald Höffding, the main theme of whose *Philosophy of Religion* is that the essence of religion is faith in the con-

* Hermann Lotze, *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion* Conybeare's trans. 1892), p. 123.

† *The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy* (1917), p. 335.

servation of value. "The conservation of value," he says, "is *the characteristic axiom of religion*" (p. 10). "Value denotes the property possessed by a thing either of conferring immediate satisfaction or serving as a means of procuring it" (p. 12). "In its innermost essence religion is concerned not with the comprehension, but with the valuation of existence, and religious ideas express the relation in which actual existence, as we know it, stands to that which, for us, invests life with its highest value. For the core of religion . . . consists in the conviction that no value perishes out of the world" (p. 6). "I use the expression 'conservation of value' in analogy with the expression 'conservation of energy,' so that the axiom asserts the conservation of value throughout all transformation" (p. 11). The opposite of all religion Höffding calls "neutralism"—*i.e.*, the conviction of the world's infinite indifference towards everything which men call "value" (p. 228).

Höffding here lays his finger on a most important element implied, though by no means always *consciously* present, in religious experience. Man's religious consciousness certainly does imply a faith that his values have behind them a sympathetic universe which will somehow back him up in his endeavours to realize them and to retain them. Man knows full well that his own powers are not adequate to the task of realizing and conserving human good, that he is not a complete master of the resources of the universe, of which indeed he forms but an insignificant part, and

that he needs help from beyond himself if his highest values are to survive. And his religious faith reaches forth to a "power not himself working for righteousness" which can guarantee the triumph of his ideals. He believes or assumes that the very "stars in their courses" fight for the things for which he most deeply cares, and that the universe will somehow see to it that the fruits of his own victories will not be lost. Perhaps the principle of the conservation of value has never been better expressed than by Browning in his *Abt Vogler:*

"Therefore to whom turn I but to thee, the ineffable Name?
Builder and maker, thou, of houses not made with hands!
What, have fear of change from thee who art ever the same?
Doubt that thy power can fill the heart that thy power expands?
There shall never be one lost good! What was, shall live as before;
The evil is null, is naught, is silence implying sound;
What was good shall be good with, for evil, so much good more;
On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven, a perfect round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.

The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by-and by."

Truly man's religious faith makes a big demand on the universe, calling upon the whole vast system of reality to guarantee to him the desires of his own heart and believing it will respond to the demand! We are not here concerned with the *validity* of this postulate of the religious consciousness. That belongs to a later stage of our discussion. We are simply pointing out that some such postulate does seem to be implied in that consciousness, the underlying assumption of which seems to be that "there shall never be one lost good," and that God's "power can fill the heart that his power expands"—*i.e.*, that the same order of reality which produced man's deepest desires can also find means of permanently satisfying them; in other words, that there is ultimate harmony between human values and the nature of reality. In making and acting on this assumption, religious faith goes beyond the attitude of science *as such*, which ignores altogether, as irrelevant to its immediate purpose, the whole question of the relation of the universe it studies to human purposes and values, and seeks to reduce the order of Nature into a system of *quantitative* relations which have no apparent relation to the *qualities* which man's æsthetic, ethical, and religious nature values. But the religious and the scientific attitudes respectively

do not contradict each other—for they are not within the same "universe of discourse," the one being existential and the other valuational—they rather supplement each other, though the religious point of view claims to be the more fundamental and inclusive. It is otherwise, however, with those philosophical theories—*e.g.*, materialism—which exalt the scientific *method* into a metaphysical *theory of reality* and categorically assert that the universe is blindly indifferent if not actually hostile to human values, and that such values, if they are to be cherished at all, can only be cherished as subjective illusions for which there is no guarantee in the nature of things. Between such theories of cosmic "neutralism" and the religious attitude there does seem to be an irreconcilable antagonism.

So far we are in general agreement with Höffding's theory of the essential nature of religion. We have now, however, to offer some criticisms of it in the form in which he expressed it.

1. Höffding's axiom of the conservation of value fails to do justice to the active and purposive character of the religious consciousness. He identifies religious experience too exclusively with feeling and too little with conation. "Religious experience is essentially religious feeling" (p. 106). "The feeling which is determined by the fate of values in the struggle for existence is the religious feeling" (p. 107). But, as Höffding admits, man is actor as well as spectator in life, and activity is an essential ingredient of his religious experience in a way his axiom does not allow for. The fact is, religion is not a mere passive faith in the *conserva-*

tion of values that already exist. It is also an experimental search for new values—not new in an absolute sense, which would make them discontinuous with the old (history knows nothing of newness in that sense)—but new in the sense that the old values are ever being deepened and enriched in content, and are ever extended over new areas of life. The religious consciousness is not content with merely maintaining the *status quo*. Here Höffding has been led astray by the analogy he draws between the religious postulate of the conservation of value and the scientific postulate of the conservation of energy. The sum of physical energy which the scientist postulates is a fixed quantity. Energy can be transformed from one kind to another, but its sum remains the same through all its transformations. But the sum of values is not an invariable quantity. It may increase or it may diminish. And in the words of Professor W. R. Sorley, "the demand which the religious consciousness makes always includes the moral demand for the increase of value; and it is of every increased value, and finally of values as fully perfected, that it postulates the conservation." "Practical morality seeks to infuse its values into every region of human life, and comes into union with religion in the faith that this enterprise will not fail."* It is true that religion is apt to be conservative. This is pointed out by Hoffding. "Religion is inclined to proceed from

* W. R. Sorley, *Moral Values and the Idea of God* (1918), pp. 179, 181. See the whole of chap. vii.

far too narrow a concept of value, or from the assumption that the content of values has been discovered once and for all, so that all we now have to do is to preserve the same. But so long as new experiences arise, so long new values may arise, although religion *always* [italics ours] offers a certain resistance to them, and can only gradually be induced to include them in the content which she believes will be preserved."* There is some point in this criticism of the conservative tendency of religion, but we submit that the word "always" is far too sweeping. We cannot agree with the suggestion that the adoption of new values by religion is always due to pressure from outside itself. The *prophetic* type of religion at least is progressive. It is true that morality, art, science, and philosophy have contributed immensely to religious progress. But religion could not have assimilated the new values discovered or created by these disciplines were not the progressive outlook inherent within itself and not imposed upon it as something alien to its whole genius. The fact is, religion is ever actively engaged with the other disciplines in the enterprise of discovery and of the reconstruction and transvaluation of life's values. It even demands a new heaven and a new earth. The religious consciousness is purposive and creative, and not merely passive and contemplative.

2. Höffding's definition ignores that intimate personal relation, so characteristic of the religious consciousness, to a superhuman being or beings

* *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 242.

called God or the gods, regarded as the source and ground of all values. The attitude summed up in the word "worship" is so distinctive of religion as we know it in history that it cannot be ignored in our attempt to define the essence of religion. In eligion there is always an *object* into relation with which the worshipper seeks to enter, and that object—generally regarded as personal—is felt to be both itself the supreme value and the standard and source of all other values. Primitive Buddhism was, indeed, for all practical purposes, atheistic, but Buddhism failed to maintain and propagate itself as a religion without bringing in the gods and men's personal relation to the gods. Conservation of value as a mere "axiom" is an impersonal, philosophical, universal principle, and as such lacks that element of individual intimacy and warmth of which the worshipper is conscious when his worship is a real experience and not a mere convention. Religious experience has much that is analogous to the sense of security and strength which one person has as the result of his trust in another person mightier than himself or holding a more influential position than himself, to whom he yet stands in a relation of intimacy and fellowship, as when a man knows that he has a "friend in court" who has both the goodwill and the power to back him up behind the scenes so long as the things he desires are in harmony with the things which his friend in court believes are good for him, or as when a child believes in his father's love and superior strength. Religion is not merely faith

in an impersonal principle of conservation, but confidence in the "Friend behind phenomena" who cares for us and who has the power and the will to carry our efforts to victorious ends. In prayer and worship we reinforce our faith in life's values and in the possibility of realizing them by entering into fellowship with the friendly power which is the source and ground of all values. This sense of a friendly presence in the universe never supersedes that sense of mystery and the accompanying feeling of awe which we saw were characteristic of primitive religion. Such a feeling of awe we do not generally associate with ordinary human friendships, but in principle it is always present when one friend far transcends the other in power and goodness. Religion ever retains the element of mystery, while at the same time it is ever distinguished by the faith that the mysterious power behind phenomena is not a monster indifferent to human values, but is friendly and sympathetic, and that "all things work together for good to them that love God." The ineffable mystery of the universe and the intimate friendliness of the universe (or God)—with their subjective counterparts, awe and trust (or love)—these together form the whole warp and woof of the religious life. In tribal religion trust in the powers that control human destiny does not imply a fixed disposition of friendliness on the part of those powers. The spirits worshipped are capricious and malicious, yet can be made propitious if approached in the right way. But in proportion

as the gods are moralized, their fitful moods of friendliness pass into a more or less permanent disposition of benevolence, and in its highest form this view is crystallized in the Christian formula, "God is love." All this means faith in the conservation of human values through the assistance of a sympathetic superhuman power (or powers), usually regarded as personal, with which it is possible to establish harmonious relations through sacrifice and prayer and right conduct.

We may sum up our own view of the nature of religion in the following manner. Religion involves a subject and an object and a relation of subject to object. On the subjective side it includes all man's psychical functions, feeling, will and thought; on the objective side it has reference to a trans-subjective divine reality. It further involves a living relation of the subject to that reality in worship, fellowship, and service, the relation being controlled by a purpose—viz., the conservation and enhancement of human values both social and individual, but culminating in utter devotion to the divine reality for its own sake as itself the ultimate value. Religious experience claims to be more than a subjective state of consciousness. It points to a suprasensible world or order, transcendent yet immanent, a "beyond which is within," wherein values coincide with reality. And to it that perfect world of values is already by anticipation a present possession. "Such present possession of the distant sources of worth and certainty has been called 'faith'; it is the

characteristic of religion in all ages. . . . Religion is anticipated attainment,"* an anticipation, however, which does not preclude but rather inspires unceasing endeavour for realized attainment. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. xi. 1). Religion is no mere *belief* in a Suprasensible Reality as the seat and source of all values. It is still more the emotional response and volitional reaction to that Reality, the adjustment of one's whole life so as to bring it into unity and harmony with such Reality. This is, as Bosanquet finely says, "the central citadel in which Mansoul possesses religion—oneness with the supreme good in every facet and issue of heart and will." "We are saved . . . from isolation; we are saved by giving ourselves to something which we cannot help holding supreme." "We are at home in the universe, and, in principle and in the main, feeble and timid creatures as we are, there is nothing anywhere within the world or without that can make us afraid. In other words, we are at peace, at rest. Not that we have not to fight; but now the battle itself is the victory. We are certain in our own mind. We are convinced of the good, and that it is one with the supreme power."† Thus every religion is in essence, if we may borrow Royce's favourite expression, a "religion

* W. E. Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience* (1912), p. 31.

† Bernard Bosanquet, *What Religion Is* (1920), pp. 32, 6, 4 *f.*

of *loyalty*." Or in William James's expressive phrase (in which, however, he is describing morality, not religion), religion is "cosmic patriotism." It is loyalty of heart, will, and thought to that ultimate goodness which is ultimate reality; it is allegiance to the cosmos in its deepest meaning. It is not without significance that the Latin word *pius* (from which we derive "pious," "piety") meant originally dutiful, loyal (to parent, country, gods). Religious loyalty may involve much self-denial, discipline, even asceticism, but in the long run it means expansion of personality, self-expression, realization of human life both individual and collective.

II.

In the foregoing section we have not attempted a formal definition of religion (heaven forbid that we should add another to John Morley's "ten thousand"!), but we have tried to describe its essential features. It now remains to show its relation to other interests or types of behaviour. Our question here will take two forms. First, what is the relation of religion to the non-religious or secular in general? Second, what is its relation in particular to certain special aspects of life and culture, to wit, morality, art, science, philosophy?

As to the relation of religion to the non-religious or secular in general, it may be well to review in a few sentences the course of social evolution in so far as it bears on this matter. Herbert Spencer, it will be remembered, defined evolution as a move-

ment "from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity." Biological and sociological evolution are marked by a gradual differentiation of function in the course of which the homogeneous passes into the heterogeneous. This process is exemplified in the evolution of religion. In the most primitive societies religion was not differentiated from other interests or activities, such as magic, primitive industry, art, law, social organization, morality. But gradually, as the organization of life became more complex and the process we have called differentiation of function (analogous to what is known in economics as "division of labour") advanced, religion developed its own specialized institutions, methods, system of ideas, such as gods, sacrifice, prayer, temples, priesthood, theologies—things distinctively sacred. Religion thus tended to become departmental and institutional, and all the other functions of life to be regarded as in themselves secular or profane. So marked, indeed, does this distinction between sacred and secular become, at the stage when religion becomes self-conscious and differentiated, that some authorities (*e.g.*, Crawley, Durkheim) maintain that the "making sacred" of some things as distinguished from others is the very essence of religion. The danger here is for religion, by becoming too departmental and institutional, to lose contact with the remainder of life or with life as a whole, and for those spheres of life which are outside of the province of religion in this sense to become acutely secularized. There

is thus introduced into life a dualism which is not in harmony with what we would regard as the true genius of religion itself, which aims at nothing less than the unification of life as a whole. Nor is it from the side of religion alone that this process of creating a cleavage between the sacred and the secular has been going on. In recent centuries there has been a deliberate withdrawal of science, art, and ethics from religious and ecclesiastical control and an assertion of their autonomy as interests which exist in their own right. A similar tendency is seen in practical life, in commerce, industry, and politics. People habitually act on the assumption that the industrial life, for instance, is a separate sphere governed by purely economic laws which operate in their own right and cannot be interfered with by religious principles, which belong to quite another sphere—an assumption which crystallizes in that last word of worldly wisdom, "business is business."

The question arises, How far can this process of separating the sacred from the secular go? When one function of life after another is secularized, becomes independent of religious control, claims to operate in accordance with its own laws uninfluenced from "above," what at last will there be left for religion to do? Can all the functions of religion be taken over without remainder by other interests? Is religion a mere residue,* a gradually diminishing area of life destined ulti-

* *Cf.* Isa. xliv. 17, "And the residue thereof he maketh a god."

mately to vanish altogether, even as Comte once declared that "science would finally conduct God to the frontier, and bow Him out with thanks for His provisional services"? These are supremely important questions for the future of religion, and we would offer the following suggestions.

1. It is evident that in a complex civilization there must be differentiation of function. The social organism as one whole cannot do everything; it must develop special organs to discharge special functions, and each organ can serve the whole organism best by doing its own work and not attempting the work of the others. Applied to the matter we are discussing, this means that we must recognize the *relative* autonomy of the "secular" aspects or activities of life. It proved an immense gain to science, for instance, and ultimately to religion itself, when science claimed freedom from the control of ecclesiastical authority and of theology, and became in a sense secular. Science is not the same thing as religion. Each has its own province, methods, purpose, postulates. They do well to respect each other's boundaries. So also religion must recognize the quasi-independence of the economic, artistic, and ethical spheres. "Mixing things up is the great Bad," said Mrs. Carlyle. In this sense religion is one function of life amongst others, and needs its own special organ, the Church. This, it seems to us, is the biological justification of organized or institutional religion, on the one hand, and of the relative autonomy of "secular" activities, on the other.

2. But this autonomy of the secular can only be relative and provisional. Differentiation must not mean absolute separation. Religion demands nothing less than the ultimate unification of life under its own supreme control. It aims at being all-inclusive, co-extensive with the whole of life. The statement we have just made that religion is "one function of life amongst others" if taken without further qualification is misleading. It is provisionally, not ultimately, true. Religion is not a closed system; it is not one thing among many, existing side by side with the others on equal terms. It is the *whole* of life viewed *sub specie æternitatis*. It is the intensifying and the sanctifying of every human function and faculty and activity. In the light of it men reinterpret and revalue the otherwise secular facts of their life. A man's business or trade or profession is included in this revaluation. In the words of Schleiermacher, "a man's special calling is the melody of his life, and it remains a simple, meagre series of notes unless religion, with its endlessly rich variety, accompany it with all notes, and raise the simple song to a full-voiced harmony."* In its light, commonplace facts become transfigured, material objects come to have sacramental meaning, and the drab things of life come to shine with a new radiance. Said Samuel Rutherford in prison: "Jesus Christ came into my room last night and every stone flashed like a ruby." One motive which led Francis Thompson to seek to escape

* Caldecott and Mackintosh, *Selections*, p. 293.

from God, "the Hound of Heaven," was the fear—

> "Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside."

But when at last the "tremendous Lover" overtook and captured his soul, he heard His voice saying:

> "All which I took from thee I did but take,
> Not for thy harms,
> But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
> All which thy child's mistake
> Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
> Rise, clasp My hand, and come!"

This means that to discover God is to rediscover all things in Him. And nothing that is rediscovered in God can any longer be common or unclean. The whole of life becomes sacramental. This is what we mean by the all-inclusiveness of religion.

3. Yet this unification of life must be a *costly* achievement. It can be reached, not by smoothly gliding over the contrast between the sacred and the secular, but by overcoming and transcending it. A facile denial of all tension between the spiritual and the natural is more likely to lead to the secularization of the sacred than to the sanctification of the secular. No one has insisted more strongly on the truth that the natural is also spiritual and the secular is sacred than the late Sir Henry Jones in his Gifford Lectures. And yet even he rightly declares: "However true it may be that the contrast of the secular and sacred must in the last resort disappear, . . . still religion

cannot reveal its true character except where that contrast emerges and obtains full expression. Finite concerns and ends must be tried and be found to fail, and even to betray those who trust in them." [This reminds us of the line in Francis Thompson's poem we have just quoted: "All things betray thee who betrayest Me."] . . . "The value and the power of religion are revealed by the strength of the resistance which it overcomes, by the range of the secular interests which it transmutes. . . . On the other hand, the solution of the contrast must be as complete as the contrast is direct and explicit."* But we could wish that in Sir Henry Jones's own pages the sense of contrast and conflict, of stress and strain, of the *costliness* of spiritual victory and harmony of life, were even more conspicuous than it is. Mere immanentism is not in a position to do justice to the *contrast* between Nature and Supernature which is accepted though surmounted by the highest piety. There is a scale of values which an immanental theory cannot account for, and that scale involves a real conflict between the higher and the lower values. It is not alone a battle between the Bad and the Good but between the Good and the Best, between the natural and the spiritual. Emancipation from the dominion of the lower comes as the reward of victory in conflict. Or, viewed from another point of view, it is the result of being "born from above." For it is both a task and

* Sir Henry Jones, *A Faith that Enquires* (1922), pp. 40 *f.*

a gift, both a human achievement and an act of divine grace. Whichever way we look at it, there is a real Rubicon to be crossed. But while we thus stress the element of contrast, we repeat that religion cannot rest satisfied with any ultimate dualism of sacred and secular. It makes for ultimate harmony and complete unification of life. First the natural, then the spiritual (*cf.* 1 Cor. xv. 46), and finally the return of the spiritual to the natural that it may unite the natural to itself in holy partnership—thus is the circle of life made complete. The Hound of Heaven gives back with added wealth of meaning what before it had taken away. And in this unified life the contrast between religious and non-religious has been transcended:

"Nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul."

III.

We have now to ask, What is the relation of religion to those forms of human culture which seem most akin to it—viz., morality, art, science, philosophy? These are only special cases of the problem we have just been discussing, for these too may be classed with the "secular" pursuits of life. Or, rather, it would be more just to say that they deserve special treatment because they form a kind of middle territory between religion on the one hand and the purely secular, materialistic, and utilitarian sides of life—*e.g.*, the physical, economic, industrial—on the other. They are certainly spiritual in the sense that they deal with

the cultural, supra-utilitarian things of the mind, and represent the human search for the trinity of spiritual values, the Good (morality), the Beautiful (art), and the True (science, philosophy). But they may be called secular in the sense that they can be cultivated for their own sakes and may claim to exist in their own right quite apart from the sanction and support of religious beliefs, and that there often exists between them and religion a strained relation, a sense of tension and conflict.

We begin with *the relation of Religion and Morality*. Morality is the side of life which is popularly and rightly regarded as nearest to religion. It is rightly demanded that the religious man should be a morally *good* man. Religion, as we have seen, claims to be the *whole* of life, *but so does morality*. How then are we to distinguish between them? Are they identical, seeing that they cover the same area? If they are different, is there room for both? In the most primitive society they are scarcely distinguishable, for, as we have seen, life is as yet undifferentiated and homogeneous and has not developed separate interests. When they became differentiated they still walked side by side in friendly relations, acting and reacting on each other to their mutual advantage, enriching each other's content, co-operating as partners in man's spiritual enterprise, yet not co-equal in status, for religion claimed to be the more authoritative and fundamental of the two. And in this claim of authority lay the seeds of division. For as against the claims of religion the moral

consciousness came to assert that its authority lay within itself and not in any supernatural sanctions. The moralist came to resent the interference of the priest, and ethics to reject theological dogma as an unnecessary burden. Morality learnt to dispense with the leading-strings of religion, and to demand autonomy and freedom. Men came to believe that they could be good without being religious. In the nineteenth century, men like Comte, J. S. Mill, and Spencer set up a naturalistic type of ethics independent of religious or transcendental support. Then came the claim that all that is of real worth in religion itself is included in morality, that religion is but morality touched with emotion, and that the former therefore has no useful function of its own. But religion cannot be thus absorbed without remainder into morality. They are kindred but not identical. Schleiermacher's protest against this one-sided and narrow moralism, and his insistence on the mystical side of religion as direct awareness of God, are still in point. In order that we may understand the true relation between religion and morality, it is necessary (1) to make clear the *difference* between them, so that their relation may not be reduced into sheer identity, (2) to show that the difference does not mean antagonism but is consistent with the fullest harmony. We can here attempt these two things only in briefest outline.

The *difference* may be broadly characterized thus. Religion and morality have indeed this in common, that they are concerned with the Absolute

Good—viz., that which is, in Kant's phrase, good without qualification. But religion is more comprehensive, inasmuch as it includes all other values, the Beautiful and the True as well as the Good. But even with regard to the Good their attitudes are different. To the religious consciousness the Good is something *given* in the present moment of experience, something actually realized and enjoyed here and now. But to the moral consciousness it is not so much a gift as a *task*, not so much a present possession as a gradual achievement involving endless approximation, something to be sought for with great toil and labour. We have already, borrowing Professor W. E. Hocking's phrase, described religion as "anticipated attainment," "the substance of things hoped for." Things hoped for and unseen are already substantiated in religious experience. But morality is an endless process, and its goal is a flying goal which fades

"For ever and for ever when we move."

Morality lives in the arena of human effort and conflict; its field is a field of battle. But religion is victory and peace, whether it be peace by way of retreat *from* the fight (as in Buddhism), or victory and peace *in* the fight itself (as in Christianity). "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (Isa. xxx. 15). "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you" (John xiv. 27). It is confidence and repose due to faith in the conservation or Conservator of values. This is not something passive, for the effort to assimilate

the Given implies an intense concentration of mind. In Paul's teaching this distinction between religion and morality takes the form of the distinction between justification by faith and salvation by works. According to Paul, salvation is not something to be slowly achieved; it is in principle wholly appropriated in one act of faith. But whether we give it the Pauline form, or some other, the characteristic religious attitude of trust in God and communion with Him, definitely expressed in the act of prayer and worship, but also existing in a more diffused form as an ever-present atmosphere or a subconscious attitude, cannot be reduced into "mere morality." In a word, religion refuses to be simply equated with morality. It has its characteristic inner life which it cannot surrender, and this inner life cannot lose itself without remainder in morality as such.

And yet there is no antagonism, but the deepest harmony, between them. We have drawn the distinction between them rather sharply. But they cannot be separated except by sheer abstraction. In concrete experience they do not exist apart—except, indeed, where human experience is one-sided and incomplete, as in the case of those who (in W. E. Gladstone's phrase) "let their religion spoil their morality," or, in the opposite case, of those sincerely moral people who feel no need of religion. In normal experience they interfuse and interpenetrate, the result being an *ethical* religion in which the "gift" and the "task" aspects are but complementary aspects of the one spiritual life.

Had we space we think we could show that morality is necessary to religion, and that religion is necessary to morality. Morality is certainly necessary to religion. The ideal good which to religious insight is already a present possession must needs be progressively translated into realized fact, both in the individual life and in the social order. In the case of the individual, this progressive realization of the ideal good is what in Christian theology is technically known as "sanctification," a gradual ethical process, as distinguished from "justification by faith," an anticipatory appropriation of saving grace once for all. It is recognized that these two, though logically separable, are but moments in the one life. In reference to social life, this gradual realization of the ideal means the building up of a new social order that shall embody in the whole of our commercial, industrial, political, and international life the religious vision of God's will and purpose. The "substance of things hoped for" must become the very substance of things that actually are, both in the personal and in the communal life. The contribution of the ethical consciousness to the religious life throughout the ages has been of incalculable value. The great prophets of all religions have been insistent in their emphasis on the ethical qualities of righteousness and love as attributes of God and of the truly religious life. The emphasis on "the social gospel" in Christendom to-day arises from the conviction that the supreme religious values must be translated into marketable commodities in real life.

Equally true is it that religion is necessary to morality. Morality is not self-sufficient; it is a phase of the spiritual life which points beyond itself. It raises problems which can only find their solution in religion. The unconditional authority of the moral law must be grounded in the nature of things, must have its roots in God. It has need of the religious hypothesis to back it up. If the Good is not the power that rules the world, why should I recognize its authority over my life? Morality cannot defy the universe. Huxley's famous idea of the ethical process as a gladiatorial fight against the whole cosmic process—an open war against what he called "the unfathomable injustice of the nature of things"—may at first have the effect on us of a challenging call to arms. But an adventure based on an open defiance of the cosmos is a policy of despair which is bound in the nature of things to fail. To doubt that the universe is buttressed up by divine purpose is sooner or later to suffer collapse in the moral enterprise. It is religion alone that can give the sense of worth-whileness to moral effort, and bring us into touch with the ultimate sources from whence moral energy may be replenished and reinforced. The conclusion we come to is that religion can never be merged in morality and so ultimately vanish as a distinct function of life. It is no mere pedagogue during humanity's pupilage, destined to pass away when the pupil comes of age. Religion and morality are partners in the spiritual enterprise of life, and we venture to add that religion will remain the "predominant partner."

Considerations of space compel us to deal more briefly with the *relation of Religion to Art.* Art at its best is a superb expression of man's quest for the ideal, chiefly of ideal *Beauty*. Its function is to embody beauty in sensuous forms, colours, and sounds. It is the offspring of the marriage of the spiritual with the sensuous. In the words of Hegel, "the Beautiful is essentially the spiritual making itself known sensuously, presenting itself in sensuous concrete existence, but in such a manner that that existence is wholly and entirely permeated by the spiritual, so that the sensuous is not independent, but has its meaning solely and exclusively through the spiritual and in the spiritual, and exhibits not itself but the spiritual."* Now if the function of art is to express the beautiful, and if the soul or meaning of beauty is essentially spiritual, then we may expect to find an intimate relationship between art and religion. For religion, too, deals with the spiritual behind and within the physical. We are, therefore, not surprised to find that from the earliest times religion and art have walked hand in hand. History shows that great art has always been inspired by religion. Moreover, it shows that art, consecrated itself from the first to the service of religion, in painting, architecture, music, sculpture, poetry, used to image forth men's ideas of deity and their feelings of adoration and reverence. Yet in modern times religion and art have been somewhat estranged from each other. On the one side

* Hegel, *Philosophy of Religion*, vol. ii., p. 8.

we have the Puritanic revolt against the use of sensuous forms and colours in religion. This is due to the stern moralism and intellectual austerity —the emphasis on religion as right conduct and true doctrine—and the horror of anything approaching idolatry, which mark men of the Puritan type. On the other side there is the demand of art itself for autonomy, expressed in the cry "Art for art's sake"; the claim that art in its creative effort has to be judged by its own standards alone and not by moral or didactic or religious standards. Now both these revolts—the Puritanic revolt against a merely æsthetic and sensuous religion, and the artistic revolt against the tyranny of external standards—are justified up to a certain point. There is real danger that in religious art the sensuous should become an end in itself and not, as Hegel declared it should be, the vehicle and instrument of the spiritual, and that religion should lose its appeal to the reason and conscience of men and become a mere form of æsthetic enjoyment. Hence the value of the Hebrew insistence on the spirituality of God and of religion, culminating in the saying: "God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." But the reaction from æsthetic religion may lead to the other extreme, and may mean an undue hardening and impoverishing of the human spirit. We have something to learn from the Greek, with his "Religion of Beauty" (as Hegel called it), as well as from the Hebrew. As to the cry "Art for art's sake," we may heartily agree with the artistic

demand for autonomy provided it be relative, not absolute, autonomy that is claimed. There can be no ultimate disharmony between the three values, the Good, the Beautiful, the True. The work of the artist *qua* artist may be largely *amoral*, but it cannot be really *immoral* without ceasing to be truly artistic. True art is essentially religious, though it cannot take the place of religion. It is an interpretation of reality from a certain point of view. For reality is beautiful as well as good. Beauty is an absolute value; it is a fundamental attribute of God. And art by interpreting reality from the point of view of beauty carries further the revelation of God given in morality and science and so helps us to get into closer touch with the Eternal. Hence, religion needs art. It might likewise be shown that art needs religion, which alone can lead men to the ultimate fount of all creative inspiration.

The relation of Religion to Science has often been discussed. Our present interest in the matter lies in this question, Has religion any useful function to discharge that cannot be taken over by science? This is essentially the age of science. Is there need of or room for religion any more, now that science has enabled man to understand and master the world and make it subserve his needs more efficiently than religion ever succeeded in doing? What is there left for religion to do? Can it serve any useful purpose that cannot be served as well or better by science? There has long existed a suspicion or conviction (not nearly

so common now among the more enlightened as used to be the case until recently) that there is some inherent incompatibility between religion and modern science, and that the one will have to give way to the other. This is really due to a complete misunderstanding of the relation between them and of their respective functions and methods. The element of truth in the view referred to is that science and religion respectively adopt completely different attitudes or methods of approach to reality. The error lies in elevating the difference of attitude and method into mutual hostility and incompatibility, whereas it only means a necessary "division of labour" whereby one supplements the work of the other.

The difference between the two attitudes may thus be briefly described. The religious attitude is frankly personal or valuational. It goes forth to the world definitely to make demands upon it and to find satisfaction for certain personal desires; it interprets the nature of reality in terms of personal and social values. But the scientific attitude is impersonal. "It sets no emotional value of any kind on the facts of life: for the true scientific spirit the investigation of the history of the worm is as worthy as the study of Shakespeare, and inquiry into the activities of a criminal as perfect as the contemplation of the stars. The scientific attitude can make no distinction of value between 'push-pin and poetry.'"* The scientist

* Stanley A. Mellor, *'Religion, Modern Science and Philosophy* (1914), p. 31.

as such seeks as far as he can to eliminate the personal equation—*i.e.*, all desire and feeling—lest they might bias his judgment. Or more accurately, he seeks to eliminate all desire except the desire for truth. He ignores the values which we call the Good and the Beautiful as irrelevant to his purpose, and limits himself to the search for what is objectively True as the only value with which he is concerned. In the last resort, he deals with quantitative measurement and ignores qualities. The perfect pattern and goal of all scientific judgment is the mathematical equation. Its ideal is severe, unimaginative, unemotional accuracy. The "mechanical" view of things answers its purpose best, as the simplest and most amenable to accurate measurement.

This self-imposed limitation, by which personal likes and dislikes and ethical valuations are ignored, enables the scientist to do his work much more thoroughly within his strictly restricted area. But the true scientist recognizes that it is an artificial restriction, justified only because effective for a special purpose. He knows that his point of view is partial and provisional and by no means final or comprehensive. It is as if in reading Milton's *Paradise Lost* we were to confine our attention strictly to the metrical structure of the lines as illustrating the rules of prosody, wholly ignoring the meaning of its ideas and the grandeur of its imagery. Science can only give us the grammar or anatomy of the universe; it cannot give, nor does it aim at giving, an interpretation of its inner

meaning. There are whole dimensions of being which cannot be reduced without remainder into a mathematical formula, such as the artistic appreciation of a superb sunset, or the ethical appreciation of an heroic deed of self-sacrifice, or the religious appreciation of the goodness and beauty of things as a whole. The physical concomitants of these things can be expressed in terms of quantity, but their quality or value as such cannot be expressed quantitatively. The charm of the rainbow is lost, as Keats complained, when its "woof and texture" are given by science "in the dull catalogue of common things." But its charm is there all the same to the appreciative eye and soul. Hence it is that the ethical, the artistic, and most of all the religious, points of view must supplement the scientific view-point. For the field of religion is not any artificially restricted area of experience, but the whole realm of experience from the standpoint of its total meaning and value. When the respective spheres of religion and science are thus defined, it becomes easy to establish a harmonious relation between them. For it is now seen that they do not occupy the same universe of discourse. How, then, can they contradict each other, or how can the one take upon itself the function of the other? There is no more meaning in the phrase "the conflict between science and religion" (that favourite phrase of the Victorian Age) than there would be in speaking of a conflict between the multiplication table and the phenomenon known as "falling in love," or

between the axioms of Euclid and the sonnets of Shakespeare. Conflict between science and religion is only possible, either when religion abandons its own proper domain and seeks to give a *scientific* or factual explanation of the world, or when science leaves its own special territory and turns its own limited viewpoint into a materialistic or naturalistic *philosophy* of reality as a whole.

We do not for a moment suggest that there can be no interaction between science and religion. Science has made enormous contributions to human life which religion can ignore only at its peril. Religion can and ought to assimilate the new scientific knowledge and modify its theology accordingly where necessary. Experience is ultimately one and indivisible, and knowledge is one organic whole. The interactions of science and religion are therefore bound to be intimate. They cannot be kept apart as it were in air-tight compartments. Religion must gratefully recognize that science is making contributions of immense value to our right understanding of the world, and so indirectly to our right understanding of God and of the "increasing purpose" that is revealed in the cosmic process. But we repeat that the synthesis of the scientific and religious attitudes in one harmonious view of life cannot be attained without full recognition of the methodological differences and even a certain sense of tension between them. They cannot be simply merged the one in the other. Religion must retain its independent standpoint and unique insight.

The relation of Religion to Philosophy can only be referred to in a few sentences. Philosophy has this in common with science, that its interest in things is mainly intellectual. But it differs from science in that each of the special sciences abstracts one aspect of experience from experience as a whole, whereas philosophy takes into account the concrete totality of interests or the inclusive experience. In common with religion, philosophy seeks to interpret experience *as a whole*, in the light of ultimate conceptions. How, then, does it differ from religion? We can only answer that on the intellectual side philosophy is more thorough and deliberate in its method of inquiry, while religion is more intuitional, and that for the rest religion is richer in variety of experienced content, embracing as it does vivid emotional reactions and earnest volitional activities as well as intellectual beliefs concerning the nature of ultimate reality and human destiny. We cannot here pursue the matter further.

The general conclusions at which we arrive may be thus summed up: (1) Religion is not departmental, but pervades all interests and sweeps all life into its orbit; (2) yet in spite of its all-pervasiveness, religion cannot surrender its self-identity and supremacy by losing itself in other interests, for it has its own unique contribution to make to human experience. Its influence is (or should be) all-pervasive just because it occupies a central position in life which no other interest can occupy. In the whole of this chapter we have had chiefly in mind

religion in its higher developments rather than what religion actually is at all times and places. We have borne in mind Aristotle's suggestion that it is the *end* of an evolutionary process that reveals most fully the nature of the principle which is present throughout.

HITHERTO we have been almost wholly occupied with the question, What religion *is?* We have tried to describe its origin, its psychical functions, its historical development, its essential nature. But from the question, What religion *is?* the philosophy of religion has to pass on to the question, Is religion *true?* Of course, this question, "Is religion true?" does not mean, Are all religions true in all their details of doctrine or belief? It goes without saying that they cannot be true in that sense, for they are in many points mutually contradictory, and frequently teach things which to the enlightened mind seem obviously illogical and absurd. Nor is it a question of how far any one selected religion is true in all its doctrinal elaborations. That is a matter for doctrinal theology rather than for the philosophy of religion. Our question is, Is religion, as such, true—*i.e.*, religion in its essential postulate as we have sought to describe it in the last chapter? There can be no doubt that religion *means* to be true. The religious man takes his religion seriously, as involving a true revelation of the character of the reality which is behind phenomena. He cannot rest content with benevolent and picturesque lies or with a merely subjective feeling. He takes his religion not as a narcotic, but as a

revelation of the real nature of things, so far, at any rate, as the nature of things stands related to personal and social values. The subjective worth of religion cannot long survive the belief in its objective truth. Religion refuses to regard itself as a disease, a case for the pathologist, however sympathetic, but regards itself as a normal and healthy appreciation of the inner meaning of things in so far as they bear on human life. Philosophy is therefore confronted with the question, Are the assumptions which underlie the religious consciousness valid? In postulating that the Nature of Things is favourable to human values, have men in all ages been simply making a vain attempt to give their own subjective fancies the sanctions of the universe? Or is the universe in very truth of such a nature as the religious consciousness supposes it to be?

At the threshold of this inquiry we are confronted with a preliminary question, Is the mind of man capable of knowing ultimate reality? Has it resources for grasping the nature of the supra-sensible? To answer this question is the task of that branch of metaphysics known as Epistemology, or the problem of the nature, origin, possibility, and limits of human knowledge. It is impossible wholly to isolate the problem of knowledge from the problem of the nature of reality. They cannot but overlap each other, for the views we hold of the possibility and nature of knowledge will largely depend on the views we hold of the nature of reality, and *vice versa*. But so far as we can keep

them apart we shall now confine ourselves to the problem of knowledge, postponing the question of the nature of reality to our final chapters. We have to consider the problem of knowledge in general as well as the problem of religious knowledge in particular. The question of the possibility of knowledge in general is by no means irrelevant to our purpose, for if *all* knowledge is so tainted with subjectivity that it can give no clue to the real nature of things, it is obvious that religious knowledge, perhaps *a fortiori*, is likewise untrustworthy. The scepticism which declares that the mind is incapable of knowing ultimate reality undermines the foundations of religion. We need, then, to inquire into the trustworthiness of our instruments of knowledge.

I.

Some (perhaps the majority) of the very greatest thinkers of the world have shown the utmost confidence in the competence of human reason as an instrument in the discovery of truth. This is the case, for instance, with Plato and Aristotle among the ancients, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Hegel among the moderns. These thinkers did not recognize any gulf between thought and truth. They assumed that, in Spinoza's words, "it is, *primâ facie*, of the nature of a thinking being to frame true or adequate thoughts."* And the greatest triumphs of the human mind in science

* Cited by B. Bosanquet, *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy* (1921), p. 82.

and philosophy have been inspired by this healthy trustfulness of thought in its own capacity for knowing the truth. This does not mean the uncritical acceptance of mere "opinions" as final. Those who have believed most strongly in the possibility of valid knowledge have been fully conscious of the fact that naïve popular opinions have to pass through the purifying furnace of strenuous thinking before they can attain the status of knowledge.

But this faith in the competence of the mind to grasp the truth of things has not been allowed to pass unchallenged. In ancient Greece it was challenged by the Sophists and the Sceptics. In modern times, while knowledge of the phenomenal world has made unparalleled progress, doubt or denial of the mind's capacity to know the reality behind phenomena has amounted almost to a disease. Modern philosophy has been obsessed by the epistemological question, How can man get to know the world? The problem owes its origin in its acute form to the sharp scission created by Descartes between the mind as *res cogitans* and the world as *res extensa*, mind and matter being conceived as two distinct substances which have nothing in common, which are separated as to their nature by the whole diameter of being, though in some mysterious way they constitute a working partnership. By his dualism of substances Descartes created a chasm between the knowing mind and the known world which philosophy has ever since been trying to bridge. Descartes himself

was no sceptic, but a rationalist who was firmly convinced of the possibility of knowledge. It was English Empiricism, beginning with Locke, that set thought on the path which led to scepticism as to the possibility of valid knowledge of reality. To empiricism of the Lockian type sense perception is the ultimate source of knowledge; and since sense perception can never lead us beyond particular facts to universal and necessary truth, the inference was bound sooner or later to be drawn (as it was drawn by Hume) that universally valid knowledge is impossible. What we know is not the objective world, but simply our own ideas. Locke himself was saved from subjectivity by his belief in primary qualities (extension, motion and rest, figure, etc.) as inherent in the objects themselves. But he set his feet on the slippery slope by maintaining that our ideas of *secondary* qualities (colours, sounds, heat and cold, etc.) are not copies of things, but merely subjective sensations in us which we erroneously ascribe to objects. But it was impossible for empiricism to remain long in this half-way house. Berkeley proceeded a stage further and reduced even the primary qualities into inner states of the mind, until there was nothing left in the universe but minds and their ideas. Thus we have subjective idealism or mentalism in its extreme form. Hume developed empiricism still further into radical scepticism, and resolved both the knowing mind and the known world into a succession of isolated impressions and ideas linked together by the mere habit of association

and not by any bond of universal and necessary truth. Impressions arise out of the unknown and give no ground for asserting anything of the real nature either of the self or of the world. Thus knowledge is completely dissociated from reality.

So far as the problem of knowledge is concerned, Hume's theory simply registers an impasse, and it is not surprising that it had the effect on Kant (as Kant himself put it) of "awaking him out of his dogmatic slumber," and of compelling him to face anew the whole problem with a view to safeguarding the universality and necessity of knowledge while doing justice to the element of truth in empiricism. The results of his profound research are given in his elaborate and epoch-making *Critique of Pure Reason*, wherein by a critical analysis of experience he seeks to discover how knowledge is possible and what are its conditions and limits. He finds in concrete experience a synthesis of rational (transcendental) and empirical factors, yielding a knowledge that is valid, indeed, within the phenomenal or scientific sphere, but which is still incapable of penetrating beyond the veil to the suprasensible or "noumenal" world. Thus the subjectivity of knowledge remains, inasmuch as knowledge is conditioned by certain *a priori* forms and categories (space, time, causality, etc.) which have their origin in the mind itself and cannot, so far as we know, be predicated of reality as such. Ultimate reality is for ever concealed behind experience and is inaccessible to knowledge in the strict sense. We do not know "the thing

in itself," we only know things as they appear to us.

All this is very familiar ground to every student of philosophy. It is a bare outline of the history of epistemology in its classical period, culminating in Kant, whose critique of knowledge is the chief source of nineteenth-century *Agnosticism* as represented by such men as Huxley and Herbert Spencer with their doctrine of ultimate reality as "unknown and unknowable." Thoroughly agnostic, too, was the standpoint of Comte and the Positivists. The type of agnosticism which was rampant during last century is now almost obsolete in philosophy (though its popular influence lingers on), hence we need not give much space to the refutation of it. Its essential defect is that it is based on the unconscious assumption that man is somehow an alien in the very world which gave him birth and in whose bosom he lives and moves and has his being, that he is doomed to look at the universe through the medium of forms and categories of thought which are, so to speak, mental spectacles of foreign manufacture. Now this is really contrary to our whole post-Darwinian habit of thought, by which we regard man as "organic to the world," continuous with Nature though transcending it, one who was born, not in a vacuum, but in the womb of Mother Nature, and whose very existence depends on his understanding and obeying Nature. We must think, too, of the forms of his understanding, not as imported articles, but as products which are native to the

soil, fashioned gradually in the process of his self-adaptation to his environment in the struggle for existence. When we think of the natural history of man biologically and psychologically, the fixed chasm which epistemology has created between man and his world disappears. As Hegel said in criticism of Kant: "Thoughts do not stand between us and things, shutting us off from things; they rather shut us together with them." They do so, we would add, because thoughts and things are genetically related. They are complementary elements of one system. Because of man's affinity with Nature he is able to read her secrets; indeed, we may say that he is, like Shelley's Apollo, "the eye with which the universe beholds itself." "The rational being appears as the goal to which Nature is working—namely, the development of an organ by which she may become conscious of herself and enter into the joy of her own being."* This view of the mind as the very voice of the world, its authentic medium of self-knowledge and self-expression, may seem somewhat mystical, but it is far more reasonable than the Cartesian dualism of thought and extension, and the Kantian dualism of pure matter to which all form is alien (the world) and pure forms to which all matter or content is alien (thought). It is this dualism which is the taproot of agnosticism. It arises from thinking of mind as the mere remainder when the objective

* A. S. Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy* (1917), p. 114. See the whole of Lect. vi.

world is subtracted from the totality of experience, and of the world as the remainder when mind is subtracted, with the consequent difficulty of bringing together again the parts which have thus by sheer abstraction been separated. When we take due account of the biological or evolutionary view of man as organic to the world, we shall find it easier to recognize that the universals of thought are not created by mind and imposed upon some alien stuff, but inherent in the world itself and only becoming articulate in the mind of man.

In view of the deadlock to which the epistemology both of the English Empiricists and of the Kantian Criticism led, it is not surprising that philosophers were driven to seek some other method of knowing reality than that of either sense perception or pure reason, both of which were found or believed to be incapable of leading us to the inner truth of things. This endeavour to find another method goes back to Kant himself, who in his second *Critique* insisted on the "primacy of the practical reason," or the moral will, which postulates certain ultimate truths (God, freedom, immortality) which are "withdrawn from any possible insight of speculative reason." While the pure speculative reason is doomed to be neutral in relation to ultimate reality and leaves us in a state of suspense with regard to its nature, our moral consciousness makes certain demands on the universe which it regards as absolutely necessary to its own life and validity. To pure reason these ultimate principles are at best only ideals (regula-

tive ideas), incapable of proof or of disproof; but to the moral will they are constitutive of reality itself. Here we have a mode of access to truth which is not knowledge in the strict sense, but takes the form of postulates which must be valid if the unconditioned imperative of the moral law is to be valid.

From this side of Kant's teaching sprang various forms of intuitionism and voluntarism, which sought to follow some other guide than pure intellect in the search for ultimate reality. Hence the strong anti-intellectual strain which is so prominent a feature of recent thought. Some have maintained that there is possible a direct awareness of reality which is of the nature of intuition. The pioneer of this school was Schopenhauer, who fastened on Kant's principle of the primacy of the will. He held that in our immediate awareness of ourselves we have an intuition, not mediated by thought, of the will as the ultimate fact in reality. This direct revelation of the true nature of the self as will serves as a key to an "intuitive interpretation" of the inmost being of the whole of Nature, and so we are able to identify Kant's "thing-in-itself" with will—*i.e.*, to define reality in terms of that sense of self-preserving and life-enhancing appetency which reveals itself in man as instinct, desire, and volition.

In our own days the *Intuitionism* of Schopenhauer has been developed along highly original lines by *Bergson*. He, too, finds the clue to reality, not in logical thought, but in the nature of the human consciousness as directly disclosed to itself.

"The consciousness we have of our own self in its continual flux introduces us to the interior of reality, on the model of which we must represent other realities. All reality, therefore, is tendency, if we agree to mean by tendency an incipient change of direction."* Reality being thus essentially flux, change, mobility, its nature can only be grasped by intuition, or the mind's immediate awareness of continual flux as disclosed within itself. The intellect is doomed to distort and misrepresent reality because of its inherent tendency to break up the indivisible flux into an aggregate of immobilities in the form of fixed concepts. It gives snapshots of reality, immobile pictures of mobility. It arrests, analyses, schematizes the flow of duration, and thereby does violence to its very nature. The intellect can only deal with the inert and static, and attains its perfection in logic and geometry. It may, indeed, seek to imitate the idea of movement by putting a series of immobilities together, hanging them on to the abstract idea of movement at the back of the mind, after the fashion of the cinematograph; but its units are still static states. The intellect inevitably spatializes time and mechanizes life. Thus Bergson would agree with Wordsworth in his complaint that—

> "Our meddling intellect
> Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:
> —We murder to dissect."

* Henri Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics* (E. Tr. 1913), pp. 55 *f.*

The pathway to reality, therefore, is not to be found in logic or science or analytic thinking, but in the metaphysic of intuition. "By intuition is meant the kind of intellectual sympathy by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible. Analysis, on the contrary, is the operation which reduces the object to elements already known—that is, to elements common both to it and to other objects."* The affinity of intuition is with instinct rather than with discursive thought. It is instinct become disinterested, self-conscious, wound up into knowledge instead of wound off into action, and so capable of leading us to the most intimate secrets of life. It is akin to the æsthetic faculty of the artist or the superior insight of the poet of genius, which does not, like the intellect, survey its object piecemeal from without, but identifies itself sympathetically with the whole living movement of reality itself. While the intellect is practical and is orientated towards action, intuition is untrammelled by utilitarian ends and so gains disinterested knowledge. In intuition the knower plunges into the flux of reality and knows reality from within by being one with it.

We are not here concerned with Bergson's theory of the nature of reality, but only with his theory concerning the possibility of *knowing*

* Bergson, *op. cit.*, p. 6. For the cinematographical mechanism of thought see his *Creative Evolution* (E. T. 1910), chap. iv.

reality. Though Bergson is not dealing with the problem of *religious* knowledge, his view of how reality can be apprehended by direct awareness, rather than by discursive thought, has obvious affinity with religious mysticism, and it has been eagerly exploited as a philosophical defence of mysticism. It is certainly in line with the testimony of the religious consciousness that "spiritual things are spiritually discerned"—*i.e.*, that spiritual things must be lived and experienced from within and not merely observed *ab extra* in order to be understood, and this means sympathetic identification of oneself with spiritual reality. As to the possibility of knowing ultimate reality, Bergson denies it, if by knowledge is meant conceptual or logical knowledge. For intellectual categories can only apply to static and inert entities and not to the flux of reality. Nevertheless, a valid comprehension of reality *is* possible, if not by way of thought, yet by way of intuition. Thus it would appear that Bergson's theory is not inconsistent with the claim of religious experience to have access to the ultimately real. For to religion the *method* by which we may have access to truth is a secondary matter, provided that a genuine apprehension of the nature of things is in some way or other open to us. What makes religion impossible or illusory is any view that fixes a gulf between human experience and the real nature of things in such a way as to make reality not only unknown and unknowable, but inaccessible to man. The Bergsonian theory recog-

nizes no such gulf, for by intuition an intimate *rapport* with the inmost nature of things is possible. So far the religious interest is safeguarded. Moreover, Bergson's protest against intellectualism is justified in this, that intellectualists often forget that the apprehension of truth is the act of the whole consciousness and not of some isolated faculty of reason. The organ of truth is the total personality. And intuition seems to be more comprehensive than intellect. It is intellect suffused by emotion, thought saturated by living sympathy with its object, brain penetrated by the heart. The apprehension of reality by the whole personality leads to a more intimate knowledge than the hearing of "great argument about it and about" which left Omar Khayyám still outside the temple of truth.

Thus Bergson has rendered service to our apprehension of reality by freeing the mind from bondage to the categories of mechanism. But he has done so by unduly narrowing the meaning and range of knowledge, by drawing too sharp a distinction between thought and intuition, by arbitrarily limiting the former to the realm of static entities and denying to it any validity in the realm of absolute truth. But no such sharp boundary line can be drawn between thought and other phases that disclose themselves in the structure of experience. It is not within the sphere of mathematics and physics alone that thought has achieved its triumphs. It has coped more or less effectively with the whole realm of life's tasks and problems.

It is not limited to that which is rigid and stable. It is dynamic, and adapts itself to the movement of life and the challenge of new situations. The categories of movement, purpose, goodness, beauty, life, are as real and significant to thought as are the categories of quantity and space. Thought is as much at home in ethics, art, religion, and philosophy as it is in physical science and in the making of machines. It is true that it has not been able to arrive at such definite and universally accepted results in the former group of activities as in the latter, but that is only because the phenomena with which the former deals are much more complex, concrete, and therefore difficult than is the case with the latter, where thought has achieved its triumphs by arbitrary simplification of its problems through abstraction. But the same intelligence which in science works by the method of abstraction is driven by its inherent craving for a knowledge of the whole to correct its own abstractions and to seek to comprehend reality as a concrete totality. To regard thought as a mere utilitarian instrument forged by evolution for narrowly practical ends is to caricature its nature. Nor is it legitimate to take refuge from thinking in an intuition which is supposed to be wholly diverse from knowledge. There is no break between thought and intuition. Or if a break be insisted on, then it can only be at the expense of a reversion of intuition back to mere unconsciously directed instinct. Intuition without rational reflection is mere confused feeling, and

is as dumb and inarticulate as instinct. To get behind intelligence is to fall back into "vague nebulosity," and to open the floodgates of sentimentalism and primitive emotionalism. Intuition without intelligence is individualistic, private, incommunicable—"inexpressible," to use Bergson's own word in the quotation we made above. But truth is social, universal, communicable, objective; it is common property. There is need of thought-construction in order to articulate the meaning of the contents of intuitional experience, so that such "truths" as "in manhood darkly join, deep-seated in our mystic frame" may be made "current coin" in the great world of social intercourse.

We must briefly point out the bearing of this on the problem of religion. Bergson admits that we can experience reality, and the religious consciousness claims that it *does* experience it. But if we can experience reality, nothing in the long run can prevent us from translating the experience into ideas more or less clearly formulated. We cannot accept the view that there is a fundamental and inevitable discrepancy between the religious experience and the religious idea, which implies that religious experience is not capable of yielding true knowledge. Such a view would lead to obscurantism in religion, or to a form of scepticism. We should, of course, heed Bergson's warning, and see to it that our ideas do not become rigid and stereotyped, but remain always sufficiently flexible to adapt themselves to our

growing experience. But intellectual ideas there must be, if religion is not to lapse into blind credulity or into undifferentiated feeling. The *adequacy* of the religious idea to express reality is the final problem of the philosophy of religion, but that question does not fall to be discussed in this chapter.

Another form the anti-intellectualistic movement has taken is *Pragmatism*, which is in some respects closely akin to Bergson's teaching. This movement, too, goes back for its starting-point to Kant's "primacy of the practical reason," which becomes, in William James's teaching, "the will to believe." In Pragmatism, however, the Kantian distinction between phenomena and noumena, or appearance and reality, disappears. The main tenets of Pragmatism are well known. It gives the intellect a subordinate place by making it the organ of will. All thought is personal and purposive. Ideas are instruments of life and not images of a pre-existing reality. Even such ultimate principles as mathematical truths and the laws of Nature are not copies of reality, but tools fashioned by man for his use. Like all tools, they are to be evaluated according as they perform what is demanded of them. That idea is true which "works." An idea *is* what an idea *does*. Truth is thus a man-made instrument to enable us to manipulate events successfully; it is a demand we make on reality; it is a working hypothesis. "Nothing more is required of a truth than that it should be relevant to a specific

situation, valuable for a purpose."* Thus the Pragmatists agree with Bergson in their utilitarian view of thought as something which is severely practical, orientated towards efficient action. But they differ from him in having no room left for that intuitional grasp of truth for its own sake, and apart from its practical consequences, which in Bergson compensates for the limitations of conceptual thought. To the Pragmatist there is no such thing as distinterested knowledge of truth. An idea or judgment not inspired by interest or prompted by motives is a pure fiction and has no meaning or place in the economy of things. Here there is no question of knowing some self-subsisting truth. Truth is *made* in the act of knowing it. It is not something we discover, and which is there to be discovered. To verify is not to find truth, but to make truth, and thereby in a sense to make reality. Knowledge is therefore not a process of copying or contemplating reality, but a fashioning of reality according to our purposes. There is thus no question of a chasm between truth and knowledge, or between reality and appearance.

Pragmatism has rendered useful service by its insistence on the instrumental character of truth. The disinterested pursuit of truth, which is the aim of all honest inquirers, is a noble ideal in so far as it means the elimination of personal bias and prejudice. But strictly speaking there is no such thing possible for man as a purely dis-

* F. C. S. Schiller, *Riddles of the Sphinx*, p. 133

interested or motiveless pursuit of truth. What we have absolutely no interest in and no use for has no existence for us. Truth is itself a value in which man is interested, and is therefore relevant to human purpose. And further, we may accept the pragmatic criterion of truth which tests its validity by its practical consequences, not in a narrowly utilitarian sense, but in the sense of its adequacy to every situation to which it is relevant and its harmony with the rest of our experience. But in its extreme forms Pragmatism runs into extravagant paradoxes and lends itself to subjectivity and anarchy. This is the case when man is said to *make* truth, not to *find* it. This view amounts to a denial of absolute or even objective truth. To say that to be true means nothing more than to be "relevant to a specific situation" implies that, when the situation has changed, what was once true may be so no longer. It implies, too, that even at one and the same time what is true for one person may be false for another—that, *e.g.*, the doctrine of transubstantiation may be true for the devout Catholic because he finds it "works" satisfactorily, while to the Protestant it is false because to him it answers no useful purpose. Paradoxical, too, is the view that we make reality. It is stimulating to be reminded that we have a part to play in the fashioning of the world, that reality is in a sense unfinished, that it is in the making, and that we have our share in the making of it. To realize this is to turn life into a creative enterprise which we may

enter upon with zest and with a sense of dignity and responsibility. Yet our making of reality is conditioned by a reality which already exists and which imposes its laws upon us. Our ideas will not "work" unless they conform to those laws. They operate successfully only when they are in harmony with the nature of things. As Bacon insisted, we overcome Nature only by obeying her. We must stoop to conquer. The view that reality is indeterminate and plastic, to be moulded to human desire, while it contains an element of truth, is in its extreme form quite untenable. Omar Khayyám well knew that it was in vain that he would conspire to "shatter to bits this Scheme of Things entire" and then "remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire." "Unlimited co-operation with God in world-making we have; not, however, in ultimate *God-making*. . . . An ultimate empiricism, a deference to what is given, not makable, just in these regions of the super-sensible and the supernatural, is an attitude wholly necessary to human dignity, and to true religion."* "I accept the universe," said Margaret Fuller. "Gad! she'd better!" was Carlyle's sardonic comment. For the problem of knowledge (with which we are now concerned), this means that there is an objective Scheme of Things which it is our business to try and understand, and which we do not ourselves create in the act of understanding it. Pragmatism relieves the strain of the problem of

* W. E. Hocking, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience* (1912), p. xvii.

the possibility of knowing the truth by practically identifying truth with the knowing process itself. But this is to solve the problem by the easy method of denying one of its factors—viz., the Given Reality which is the ultimate object of knowledge.

In recent philosophical speculation there is a marked tendency towards a *new form of Realism*. The school of Neo-Realists, represented by such thinkers as Bertrand Russell and S. Alexander in England, and the six joint authors of *The New Realism* (1912) in America, seek to get rid of the taint of subjectivity which clings to Pragmatism and infects the idealism of Berkeley and Kant and those who have been influenced by them. Indeed, some of them brush aside with a gesture of impatience the whole epistemological problem, which has led philosophy to the quagmire of subjectivity. One of the watchwords of the American neo-realists is "the emancipation of metaphysics from epistemology."* The neo-realist "regards analysis and conception as means of access to reality, and not as transformations or falsifications of it, and asserts the independence of reality in the knowing of it."† He is in close sympathy with the methods and spirit of natural science. Distinguished scientists with a philosophical turn of mind, like A. N. Whitehead, reject the phenomenalism which hampered the agnostic scientists of Victorian and later times, and adopt

* The title of W. T. Marvin's essay in *The New Realism*, pp. 45 *ff*.

† *Ibid*., p. 35.

the realistic view. Dr. Whitehead repudiates the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, and maintains that "everything perceived is in Nature. We may not pick and choose. The red glow of sunset should be as much part of Nature as are molecules and electric waves. There is but one Nature, the Nature which is before us in perceptual knowledge." And the same is true of conception. Concepts are not mental existences, but are as real and as independent of consciousness as are the objects which are in space. Bertrand Russell maintains that "there is immediate knowledge concerning universals as well as concerning sense-data."* Universals and relations are objective and not merely mental.

The protest of the neo-realists against epistemological agnosticism is healthy and in many ways convincing. It is no mean service to rid us of the bugbear of subjectivity, to cure us of morbid introspection and self-distrust, and to restore the confidence of thought in its own capacity to know the truth. It must be added, however, that in the case of the neo-realist this restored confidence of thought in itself does not seem to go much beyond the realm of Nature as investigated by the scientist. It is still short of the confidence of the great speculative thinkers in the competence of thought to deal with the ultimate values and meaning of the universe or of experience as a whole. On these final issues the New Realism is cautious and hesitant. It is, of course, the right thing to be

* B. Russell, *Problems of Philosophy*, p. 161.

cautious where there is no adequate ground to be dogmatic. But one cannot help noticing the difference between the avowed "dogmatism" of the neo-realist with regard to our knowledge of the natural world and his reserved attitude towards the world of values. He repudiates "the assumption for philosophical purposes that there is an all-sufficient, all-general principle, a single fundamental proposition that adequately determines or explains everything," and declares that one of the main motives of this fundamental dogma is "the desire of philosophers to satisfy the religious demand for an object of worship." "There are endless special philosophical questions to which there is no inevitable realistic answer, such questions as mind and body, teleology, the good, freedom; and there is as yet no general realistic philosophy of life, no characteristic issues on the verdict of religion."* This hesitancy seems to be due to a praiseworthy scientific conscientiousness which refuses to go beyond what the evidence warrants, and may be a sign that neo-realism is only beginning its work and has still many open questions. But there is point in Viscount Haldane's criticism. After pointing out that it is consistent with neo-realism for the biologist to attribute objective reality to the categories of life in respect of organisms, he adds: "If the New Realists can do so much, why do they not go

* *The New Realism*, pp. 16, 19, 36. *Cf.* Bertrand Russell, *op. cit.*, pp. 220 *f.*, and *Mysticism and Logic* (1917), pp. 97 *f.*

further and do more? They seem at times to lack the courage of their convictions. If the categories of life are as much part of a non-mental world as are those of mechanism, why are not the categories of morals and beauty and religion also part of it?"* Bertrand Russell is more explicit than the American neo-realists in maintaining that scientific philosophy (the only philosophy which deserves the name) is powerless in the realm of values. But the problem of values is universal and persistent, and it is purely arbitrary to restrict thought to the facts for which we have the warrant of sense-perception and scientific experiment, thus excluding from the competence of reason the things which are of deepest human concern.

We see that in the realm of scientific knowledge Neo-Realism has helped to rid us of the spectres of subjectivity and agnosticism which have haunted the minds of men since the days of Locke, Hume, and Kant, but that it is still hesitant about the capacity of thought to deal with the foundational truths and values of the spiritual life. For a more courageous faith in the adequacy of thought within the realm of ultimate things we have to turn to recent representatives of the *Idealistic* tradition, such as Henry Jones, Bosanquet, and Haldane. Bosanquet, for instance, in one of his latest books, pleads for the view that truth is normal to mind, error being the exception. "If you can get the mind's thought pure—that is, as it is in its own nature, and free from certain

* Haldane, *The Reign of Relativity* (1921), p. 287.

definite defects—you must possess in it a true characterization of reality. For this is the nature of thought, to characterize reality. Its doing so is not exceptional; it is inherent; it is what we mean by thinking."* It is well to be thus called back to that confidence in thought in its highest reaches which has characterized the world's master thinkers, who have aimed at an all-comprehensive insight into the ultimate nature and meaning of reality, provided, of course, the confidence be not blind and naïve, but tempered by strenuous self-criticism. The type of Idealism which we have here in mind is that which Sir Henry Jones calls "realistic Idealism," as opposed to the subjective idealism of the Berkeleian type. It shares with Realism the conviction that the world of sense-perception has being in its own right independently of its being perceived. But it further believes that this "real world" of normal experience and scientific description is only a fragment or aspect of reality as a whole, and that the mind of man is capable of apprehending more and more, as it grows in comprehensiveness and depth of insight, the totality of things in their organic wholeness and in their innermost meaning. And religious experience believes itself to have such an insight into the essential character of the world as a whole —not, of course, a perfect insight which is incapable of growth, but one which is true and valid as far as it goes.

* B. Bosanquet, *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy* (1921), p. 82.

II.

We have now to outline our own views on the problem of knowledge in so far as it bears on the philosophy of religion.

1. No man can claim to have an infallible and final knowledge of the world. For man's experience is always incomplete, and his knowledge ever grows with his growing experience. And not only is knowledge *incomplete*, but there is always the risk of actual error and illusion. Even our bodily senses, which we are inclined to trust implicitly, often deceive us, and the history of science itself is largely a record of erroneous views which were once believed and were only gradually discarded. What guarantee have we that our present knowledge is free from error? Even some of our most assured beliefs seem incapable of absolutely convincing logical proof. For instance, it seems most difficult, if not impossible, to demonstrate logically the existence of an external world and of persons or centres of experience other than oneself. Solipsism is theoretically plausible though practically absurd. And it must be borne in mind that the more abstract and formal the subject under discussion, the more easy is it to arrive at lucidity and something approaching finality, though even here knowledge is never more than relative. The more complex and concrete the facts, the less amenable are they to exact knowledge. Mathematics, dealing as it does with the bare form of quantity, is the most empty of

content and the most abstract of all the sciences, and for that very reason it is in mathematics that we approach most closely to demonstrative certainty and finality. It is clear and certain that two added to two makes four, but what do two sonnets added to two green peas amount to? According to Browning, the mark of the musician of genius is "that out of three sounds he frames, not a fourth sound, but a star," in which case the simplicity and clarity of abstract mathematics do not meet the case. The empty time of chronometry and the empty space of geometry are amenable to exact measurement—if we do not allow our confidence to be unduly shaken by Einstein's theory of relativity; but the *lived* time and *filled* space of actual concrete experience are infinitely more difficult to reduce to the terms of exact knowledge. It is not to be wondered at that demonstrative certainty and finality of knowledge is so difficult to attain with respect to the nature of ultimate reality, which means the character of the universe in its concrete wholeness.

2. Hence there is need of reverent agnosticism in our attitude towards the transcendent mysteries which surround such certain and lucid knowledge as we possess, and which even cast their shadows athwart our very certainties and lucidities. There is a true as well as a false agnosticism. There is a kind of reverent agnosticism which is the very soul of religion, and which consists in the humble recognition of the fact that the resources of human thought and language are inadequate to express

all the truth and meaning of the Ineffable Power that overrules all things, and in the sense of awe and wonder in the presence of that Mystery. This consciousness of the inadequacy of all merely human modes of apprehension to grasp the unfathomable mystery of being "persistently accompanies, as a delicate background and presupposition, all deep spiritual experience." It finds classical expression in the cry of Paul: "O the depth of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33). It is doubtful whether religion, any more than poetry and art, could survive in a universe which had been reduced to the simple noonday transparency of the multiplication-table, a world which was all light and no shade. Even science has its hinterlands of mystery. In the words of the great physicist Tait, "we do not know and are probably incapable of discovering what matter *is*." But von Hügel rightly says: "Certainly the sense of *awe*, derived by the religious soul from its vivid apprehension of the greatness of the Reality, a Reality experienced as so much deeper and richer than the soul can ever express, is specifically different from any sense of *uncertainty* as to the existence and the superhuman nature of the Reality underlying and occasioning this apprehension. Healthy mysticism and genuine scepticism are thus intrinsically opposites."*

* Baron F. von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion* (1921), pp. 39 *f*.

3. This means that, though we do not know all, our knowledge is valid as far as it goes. Complete scepticism is illogical and refutes itself. It is, as someone has said, "a medicine that purges itself out along with the disease." For the sceptic professes to know that we cannot know. How, then, does he know that? Doubt is itself a form of belief; to doubt at all we must have some criterion of certainty, some ideal of perfect knowledge which in principle is already ours. Theoretic uncertainty is quite compatible with practical certainty, as in the case of our knowledge of the reality of an external world and of other persons which the solipsist declares to be impossible. Life would be intolerable and scientific work impossible except on the assumption that we are in real and daily contact with an objective other-than-human Reality, in which we live and move and have our being. And if we do actually *experience* that Reality, no power on earth can prevent us from sooner or later translating our experience of it (or at least part of that experience) into *ideas* about it. Our thoughts about reality may never be wholly exhaustive of reality itself or even of our experience of it. But fuller experience and reflection will enable us to correct them and to make them more and more adequate. Our revised thoughts will, however, have some sort of continuity with those which they supersede, otherwise they would be unintelligible to us. Hence even the now obsolete ideas were true as far as they went. There is no absolute error or falsity; there is only

inadequacy, a taking of the fragment for the whole. The doctrine of relativity, or degrees of knowledge, as expounded, for instance, by Bradley and Viscount Haldane, implies that inadequate views are true from their own limited point of view, or within their own frame of reference, but are false in the sense of lacking in comprehensiveness and therefore in ultimacy. No bridge can span the gulf between absolute error and absolute truth, but a real progress in knowledge along the line of increasing adequacy is made possible by man's continuous experience of reality and experiments with reality.

4. This implies an *objective* Reality which is *self-communicative*. Truth is not a man-made convention, but an apprehension of reality which impresses us with its transcendent objectivity, though it be an objectivity which intersects and permeates our subjectivity. It comes to us with all the force of something *given*, though its givenness has for its correlative receptiveness and active response on our part. It is given to be used, but its truth does not consist in its use. An idea "works" because it is true, it is not true because it works. In saying that reality is self-communicative we mean much the same as is meant in religion by the doctrine of Revelation. The religious belief in revelation is apt to be overweighted with dogmatic detail, but in essence it is true. It means that it belongs to the nature of reality to reveal itself to whomsoever has ears to hear and willingness to respond. Revelation in that sense is not

confined to the sphere of religious experience. It is the condition of the progress of human knowledge and, indeed, of all human achievement in any sphere whatsoever, whether it be in science, art, morality, philosophy, religion, or in the ordinary business of life. If the universe were eternally dumb and inarticulate, by no artifice could the scientist or anyone else extract its secrets from it. All revelation, however, is not equally luminous or significant. Religious experience seems to be the point where the diffused light of revelation comes to a focus—that is, where reality (=God) reveals itself to man at its deepest and richest level.

5. Are, then, the conditions of the discovery of truth the same in religion as elsewhere? Is the organ of religious knowledge identical with that of scientific and philosophical knowledge? Or else is it the case that we come to know God in a different way from that whereby we come to understand the facts and laws of the physical universe? Is religious faith a kind of winged flight from the unreal to reality, while "secular" knowledge can only be attained by the more pedestrian method of slow and diligent search for truth? Here we are brought up against the familiar antithesis between "faith" and "reason" or "knowledge," which, broadly speaking, corresponds to Kant's distinction between the practical and the speculative reason, and to Ritschl's distinction between value-judgments and theoretic or fact judgments. Are there, then, two ways of

knowing, the way of faith and the way of reason? If so, are they equally valid? Is faith, strictly speaking, a way of knowing at all, or is it not rather a way of taking things for granted?

(*a*) A case may be made out for the view that there are two kinds of knowledge. There is, first of all, the matter-of-fact knowledge of the world around us, which comes to its perfection in the matter of thoroughness and exactitude in the natural sciences. There is, secondly, the practical acquaintance or familiarity gained by experience and aided by sympathetic intuition and appreciation, such acquaintance as is well exemplified in the relation of friends to one another. Scientific knowledge aims at being severely intellectual, impersonal, and unemotional. But the intimate knowledge which friends have one of another is not the result of a process of reasoning or scientific research, but is based on mutual confidence and affection gained through practical experience and insight. It is, broadly speaking, the distinction between knowing *about* and having acquaintance *with*, a distinction expressed in some languages by the use of two different words corresponding to the one English word "to know," such as in German "wissen" and "kennen," in French "savoir" and "connaître," in Welsh "gwybod" and "adnabod." Religious knowledge is of the latter kind. It is not information *about* God acquired by a strict process of induction, but an acquaintance *with* God accompanied by a strong

emotional tone, as in the case of human friendship. It none the less deserves the name of knowledge, provided it is sufficiently ratified by individual and social experience.

(*b*) Yet the two types of knowledge must not be kept apart in separate compartments. They must come to terms with one another. They must cohere organically within the one system of life. We have to insist on the unitary character of knowledge and of experience. The distinction between the two kinds of knowledge is provisional, not final; it is relative, not absolute. There is no clean-cut division between them, as is evident from the fact that, on the one hand, even scientific knowledge implies faith, and that, on the other hand, religious faith implies some amount of ratiocination. There is an element of faith in reason, and an element of reason in faith. On the one hand, scientific truth, like religious truth, consists of working hypotheses which have been neither logically deduced nor inductively demonstrated, but which enable us intelligently to anticipate future events and are ratified more and more by practical experience. Our conviction of the truth of the uniformity of Nature and of the conservation of energy are more like religious faith than like assent to a demonstration. This is especially true of pioneer discoveries in science. They are intuitions of faith before they become demonstrated facts. Faith is the great discoverer. In science as elsewhere it is the case that "everywhere faith goes before us as a pioneer, and the

more prosaic faculties of the mind come after to civilize the newly opened territory."* Reason itself is a matter of faith. Lotze speaks of the confidence of reason in itself as the faith which lies at the root of all knowledge. On the other hand, the religious hypothesis, if it is valid at all, is implicitly rational, capable ultimately of being vindicated and verified by just the same methods as any other hypothesis. It is not a matter of faith in the sense of blind credulity. It is not an open defiance of reason. It is true that to the obscurantist religious faith is a kind of coward's castle, a place of refuge where one may hide oneself from the light of reason and critical inquiry. But we cannot accept the view of faith expressed in the schoolboy's definition to which William James refers, "Faith is when you believe something which you know ain't true." In a unified and harmonious experience there can be no such antithesis between faith and knowledge. Religious faith must not claim special privileges in the sense of immunity from rational inquiry. It must be prepared to come out into the open and allow its tenets to be subjected to critical tests like any other hypothesis. The Ritschlian distinction between value-judgments and existential judgments is useful and suggestive up to a certain point. But it must not be taken to mean that there are two ultimately distinct kinds of knowledge, in the sense that each kind can claim validity in its own right without reference to the

* H. E. Fosdick, *The Meaning of Faith* (1918), p. 47.

other or to experience as a whole. The value-judgments of religious experience cannot remain finally self-enclosed. They must unite harmoniously with the fact-judgments of secular and scientific experience, and must come to terms with a complete philosophical world-view in which the system of existences and the system of values are combined in one comprehensive and coherent system of reality.

(*c*) But while thus insisting on the unitary character of knowledge, we must not ignore the fact that the unity of knowledge is a unity in difference. The case is not so simple as we might be led to infer from Sir Henry Jones's emphatic statement that "there is only one way of knowing." We have to recognize the truth of Viscount Haldane's view that "knowledge is not always of the same kind," that there are "levels or degrees in knowledge which have relations to each other, but are not reducible to each other."* Reality itself has many strata; hence our knowledge of reality, if it is to be at all adequate, must have its corresponding gradation. Each new level demands a new category which is not relevant to the lower levels. And so the categories must be capable of being arranged in an ascending or hierarchical

* Henry Jones, *A Faith that Enquires* (1922), pp. 63, 79; Haldane, *The Reign of Relativity* (1921), pp. 130 *f. et passim*. Jones recognizes that knowledge is a "system of systems; every part of it is a unity of differences" (p. 61). But this aspect of difference seems to be more adequately apprehended by Haldane, in the light of the principle of relativity.

order according to degree of complexity and of approximation to the concrete universal. In this way we ascend (say) from the plane of pure mathematics to those respectively of physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, sociology, ethics, æsthetics, religion, and each new step in the ascent reveals a new phase of reality which demands new and richer categories for the understanding of it. Each new category has a *primâ facie* claim to be regarded as valid and adequate within its own frame of reference. But it is only the whole hierarchy taken together that can give an adequate clue to reality as a whole. Thus the ways of knowing are not one, but many; yet all the diverse ways of knowing must coalesce in one synoptic view if our knowledge is to be adequate. It must be added that, at every stage, experience is a condition of knowledge; in other words, the knower must occupy at least as high a plane of reality as the known. Life on an infra-mental plane cannot know the things of the mind; an infra-moral being cannot know moral values. Your Peter Bells can only see the yellow primrose by the river's brim and nothing more; your Charles Lambs, being "organically incapable of a tune," may hear a symphony of Beethoven's and think it "queer stuff." So likewise the religious life must be experienced from within and on its own plane if religious knowledge is to be possible or to have any meaning for us. "Spiritual things are spiritually discerned." We cannot estimate the truth of religion by reference merely to an infra-

religious standard. In saying this we do not mean to fall back on the Ritschlian position and accept religion simply at its own valuation. We mean that the higher categories cannot be reduced into the terms of the lower in order to have their validity vindicated, but must be set each in its own place within the coherent whole of experience. The ultimate criterion seems to be internal harmony and systematic wholeness of experience.

6. Thus the problem of knowledge broadens out into the problem of experience. When we are asking, Is religion true? what we really want to know is, Does religion fill an integral place in the whole context of human experience? We are not trying to compare something within experience with something outside it, to see if they correspond. This "correspondence" or "picture" theory of truth is surely exploded. We cannot thus jump outside of our own mental "skins" to compare what is within with what is without. All we can and need do is to compare one part of experience with other parts and with the whole, to see if they cohere in a harmonious system. The part of experience that sits most loose to experience as a whole is the part about whose validity we are most in doubt. That which in our experience is unsatisfying, which gives an uncomfortable sense of looseness and incoherence and cumbersomeness, which stands in the way of aliveness and growth and mastery of one's life, which hinders the successful manipulation of the

world's resources, that is just what we are compelled to regard as untrue. Does this make our criterion subjective again, by identifying it with the mere *feeling* of satisfaction? We do not think so. For in the first place we do not mean by satisfaction a mere momentary feeling of satisfaction, or the satisfaction felt by a few eccentric individuals, but rather (taking a long view) a permanent and normal satisfaction, tested by repeated and growing experience in all sorts of circumstances and situations, tested, too, by repeated self-criticism and social criticism, tried in innumerable ways in the open field of life and the world. And in the second place we do not mean experience in the sense of mere immediacy. We give it a larger meaning, including our concepts as well as our percepts, for concepts are evolved out of percepts and fall within the whole context of experience. We include, not feeling alone, but feeling that has become articulate in thoughts. Experience is not subjective. It involves an object as well as a subject. It means an experience *of* something, a contact with a self-revealing, self-communicative reality. It is in this way that we come to know reality, and religious experience is one way of knowing it. If religion cannot stand the test of experience, construed in the large sense we have tried to indicate, it must cease to function. We believe religion to be a valid way of approach to reality because it is capable of standing the test of experience, which is the only criterion of truth we possess. And

when we come to a critical review of experience as a whole it may well be that the intimations of our ethical, æsthetic, and religious consciousness may prove to be more deeply revealing than the abstract quantitative and mechanistic categories of science.

IF the argument of the last chapter be valid, we may now assume that the human mind is endowed with a capacity to *experience* reality and to translate its growing experience into more and more adequate *knowledge* of reality. Such knowledge may never be exhaustive, but at any given stage it may be valid so far as it goes. Our argument so far, however, was only meant to remove certain agnostic prejudices which, at the very threshold of our inquiry, undermine confidence in the possibility of knowledge in general. But the general trustworthiness of experience or knowledge does not in itself afford any guarantee of its validity in any particular case. Even if we accept (as we do) the verdict of men like Spinoza and Bosanquet, that it is of the very nature of thought, when its affirmations are free from confusion, to frame true and adequate ideas about things, we have still to recognize that there are such things as errors, dreams, illusions, hallucinations—*i.e.*, subjective impressions which are not true reports of any objective reality. What warrant have we for believing that religious experience, or the view of the nature of reality which that experience implies, is in any better case than the many errors and illusions of which men have been victims? Having removed (we hope) the initial sceptical prejudice, we may proceed to ask

more specifically, Is religion true? Is the characteristic religious view of the world objectively valid? Is the universe in very truth of such a character as to support men in the pursuit of their spiritual ideals? Are human values and aspirations mere dreams woven of gossamer fancies, or are they rooted and grounded in the very heart of reality? William James, in one passage, describes man's spiritual life thus: "Man becomes conscious that this higher part (of his nature) is conterminous and continuous with a MORE of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of him, and which he can keep in working touch with, and in a fashion get on board of."* And Dante closes his *Paradiso* with the Beatific Vision which revealed to him—

> "That, like a wheel that neither hastes nor rests,
> My will revolved under the sway of Love,
> The Love that moves the sun and the other stars."

Man's religious experience is thus seen to pass confidently beyond the circle of its own subjectivity and to relate itself to "a MORE of the same quality, which is operative in the universe outside of him." It lives in the conviction that the love which sways its own inner life is the same as "the Love that moves the sun and the other stars." Is this view of reality not only inspiring and helpful but true? Is the religious confidence in the world's friendliness and its hospitality to the highest human values capable of being justified by an impartial

* Wm. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), p. 508. *Cf.* his *Pluralistic Universe* (1909), p. 307.

interpretation of the real nature and tendency of things? Is God a fact or a fiction? Are we to say with Feuerbach that the gods "are the wishes of men thought of as already realized"? Is the religious postulate anything more than a projection into the void and a hypostasizing of merely subjective human ideals? It is obvious that these are questions of the most vital and far-reaching importance for religion.

We shall first consider certain philosophical theories which, to say the least, tend to create a presumption against the objective validity of the religious postulate, and then we shall proceed to ask what positive arguments can be adduced in favour of the truth of religion.

I.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century the view of the world which seemed to present most difficulties to religious faith was that which has come to be known as *Naturalism*, which interprets the universe in the terms and categories of natural science, either as ultimate and exhaustive in the realm of reality itself or at least as the most adequate of which the human mind is capable, and which therefore rejects as futile all attempts to interpret the world in terms of spirit, value, purpose. Naturalism has many forms, but for our present purpose it will suffice to reduce them to two, which may be distinguished as (1) dogmatic naturalism, or *materialism*, (2) agnostic naturalism, often called "naturalism" simply, to distinguish

it from materialism proper. In the case of the former, the system of nature with which the physical scientist deals is thought to be actually identical with the real and ultimate nature of things, so that the reality of "spirit" as anything other than a mere mode of matter is categorically denied. In the case of the latter, it is admitted that the scientist's system of nature may not be exhaustive of reality, but it is declared to be the most significant aspect of reality and the only aspect with which we are competent to deal, so that its "spiritual" aspect may for the practical purposes of life and knowledge be ignored.

Dogmatic Materialism must here be disposed of in a few sentences. For the real difficulties of the modern mind with regard to religious faith do not lie in the direction of materialism, with its wholly unwarranted reduction of the qualitative richness of the universe into mere modes of matter in motion regarded as alone real. The views of nineteenth-century materialists like Büchner, Karl Vogt, and even of Haeckel and Loeb, have ceased to trouble or interest us. It is enough to say that, by reducing all things to matter as alone ultimately real, and thus making the lowest common measure of all things the absolute ground of them all, materialism is guilty of over-simplifying in an almost naïve way the complex facts of life and of the world.

Naturalism in its more recent form, which we have called "agnostic naturalism," is less courageous

and consistent, and considerably more modest in its positive assertions. Having adopted as an ally the agnostic epistemology, it refuses to dogmatize concerning the nature of ultimate reality after the manner of the older materialism. Both "matter" and "spirit" as substances are, it declares, unknown and purely hypothetical. Inasmuch as we cannot know ultimate reality but only the phenomenal world, it seeks to explain the universe exclusively in terms of phenomena, and this for all practical purposes means the phenomena of the physical or material world—"spiritual" phenomena being mere impotent shadows, or "epiphenomena," which for the purposes of knowledge and the practical control of life can be ignored. Huxley, who was the chief apostle of this school in Great Britain, welcomed "the gradual banishment from all regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity." "It is in itself," he wrote, "of little moment whether we express the phenomena of matter in terms of spirit, or the phenomena of spirit in terms of matter. . . . But with a view to the progress of science, the materialistic terminology is in every way to be preferred. For it connects thought with the other phenomena of the universe, . . . whereas, the alternative, or spiritualistic terminology is utterly barren, and leads to nothing but obscurity and confusion." Agnostic naturalism has been admirably characterized by James Ward as "materialism without matter, materialism with most of its consequences, but divested of its meta-

physics."* The members of this school are able quite honestly to repudiate the charge of materialism, but in practice the difference is merely nominal. This pragmatic ignoring of spiritual categories as of no use for serious thought is but little removed from a theoretic denial of the reality of spirit. In any case, what naturalism does is to reduce the known universe into a self-enclosed homogeneous system from which spiritual qualities or values must be rigorously excluded as alien intrusions which, if allowed entrance, would merely break up the coherent self-consistency and autonomy of the system. In the last analysis the system of nature is nothing but a ceaseless redistribution of matter and motion under the sway of mechanical forces, which science is content with describing in quantitative terms without the introduction of qualitative categories. If it be said that, whatever about the physical world, at any rate in the human consciousness spiritual values and purposes are real and operative, naturalism replies by reducing even man into a mere mechanism, or what Huxley calls a "conscious automaton," in which consciousness is nothing more than a kind of sleeping partner which in its sleep dreams that it *does* things, whereas the whole work is really done automatically by the intricate bodily mechanism. Thus man's spirit is merely an impotent and superfluous appendage mysteriously attached to his body, having no more to do with

* J. Ward, *Naturalism and Agnosticism* (1899; 3rd ed., 1906), vol. ii., p. 206.

his activities than the shadow cast by the running train has to do with the movements of the train. By parity of reasoning we must infer that, if in such a mechanically determined world there is room for a God, He too can be nothing more than the shadow which accompanies the movements of the cosmic automaton, the world's sleeping partner, the Absolute Dreamer, or the passive Spectator of the world-drama, and not the "Master of the show"—a kind of pale ghost of Aristotle's God living a life of self-contemplation or thinking upon His own thoughts, whose thoughts do not initiate any movements or events in the actual world and who is therefore in no real sense "the mover of all things."

The naturalistic hypothesis, with the mechanical theory for its ground plan, and the doctrine of evolution by natural selection as its constructive principle, has great methodological value for special scientific purposes. The mechanical theory enables the scientist to attain a high level of accuracy within the sphere of investigation he has marked out for himself. It makes it possible for him to get rid of superfluous luggage in the form of categories that are irrelevant for his purpose, to exclude the contingent and indefinite, to confine himself to definitely measurable quantities, and by reducing the complex to the simple to arrive at scientific formulæ of convincing simplicity and correctness. Naturalism has proved a successful working hypothesis for certain strictly limited purposes. But it ceases to "work" if hypostasized and universal-

ized into an all-inclusive philosophy. As a scientific method within restricted areas of experience it is valuable; as a comprehensive philosophy of experience as a whole, it is unconvincing. Its claim to final and exclusive truth utterly superior to any other kind of insight is wholly unwarranted. Philosophy aims at a synoptic view which does justice to all aspects of experience and to experience as an organic whole. Naturalism abstracts one aspect of experience, and when it assumes the rôle of a philosophy it elevates that aspect into a position which it is not competent to fill. It leaves out points of view which for a complete interpretation of life are most significant. It excludes such things as meanings, values, purposes, ideals, which are essential features of the world of experience. Its success lies in the sphere of description, it fails absolutely in the realm of valuation. Even within science itself a gradation of categories is necessary in order that we might understand the system of nature, and the categories of quantity and mechanism to which naturalism would reduce them all are but the lowest in the scale. The method of naturalism is, in Pringle-Pattison's phrase, "interpretation by reduction," the explaining of the higher by the lower. Sociological and psychological phenomena are interpreted in terms of biology, the biological are reduced to the level of the physico-chemical, and these again reduced to bare quantitative relationships, while the normative sciences, such as ethics, æsthetics, logic, theology, have apparently no autonomous place in the scheme

and exist only on sufferance. When this process of reduction is carried to its logical conclusion, the world's wealth of meaning is lost in the dance of atoms, life's variegated landscapes become one arid desert, and whatever daylight we enjoy passes into a starless "night in which all cows are black." As Lotze somewhere reminds us, we do not come nearer to the essential truth of the world's wondrous drama by ignoring all but the stage mechanism which effects the changes of scenery and illumination. The truth of the drama lies in its meaning and not in the machinery which produces it or in the physical constituents into which it can be analysed.

As to the view that the human mind is nothing but an epiphenomenon which has no real part in the control of phenomena, it is stated by Huxley thus: "Our mental conditions are simply the symbols in consciousness of the changes which take place automatically in the organism; . . . the feeling we call volition is not the cause of the voluntary act, but the symbol of the state of the brain which is the immediate cause of that act."* But we cannot help asking, What need is there of the symbol at all if it has no part to play in the economy of things? Why this reduplication, this "barren rehearsal," which is but an echo in shadow-land of what goes on independently of it in the real world of the brain and bodily movements? If consciousness is but an impotent appendage to the human organism, it would appear

* Quoted by James Ward, *op. cit.*, vol. i., p. 179.

to be purely ornamental, with no useful function to discharge. And Nature has a way of eliminating, by the ruthless process of natural selection, that which is of no use to the organism in the struggle for existence. Nature would not have burdened Shakespeare with a conscious mind if his physical organism could have written his plays without its aid, in a purely automatic way. And the reading of Shakespeare's plays, on our part, is not merely a matter of physical reaction to physical stimuli, but a matter of interpretation, appreciation, enjoyment, which are not reflex actions, but psychic activities, and which in turn will react in subtle ways on our outward activities and way of life. The intimate qualities of man's spiritual nature—freedom, character, personality, desire, volitions, ideals—are in the "conscious automaton" theory turned into superfluous images on an impalpable mirror, which have nothing to do with the actual course of events in the physical world, the only world that really matters. The whole logic of life is against this view.

The bearing of all this on the question of the truth of religion is obvious. We have seen that the religious consciousness is committed to a belief in the objectivity of values. It believes that the supreme values of life are not mere human conventions pitted against the nature of things, but that the ultimate ground of things as revealed to us in the universe is akin to what we recognize as the highest and best in our own experience. But naturalism, by identifying the nature of things

(so far as we can know it) with the nature with which physical science deals, reduced to its lowest terms as a system of quantitative relations, sets before us a scheme of things which is coldly indifferent and neutral to the highest and best in our experience. Human values sink into insignificance against the background of the gigantic mechanism of the universe with its cold impersonality and sheer physical determinism. And, indeed, there is much in our experience which seems *prima facie* to support the naturalistic philosophy. To speak of the world's hostility to man is indeed meaningless, for hostility implies interest. What strikes us about Nature, when things go against us, is not that it is actively hostile but that it seems cruelly indifferent to human welfare. The mechanism of natural law seems to us to be, like Mark Rutherford's Mrs. Snale, "cruel, not with the ferocity of the tiger, but with the dull insensibility of a cart wheel, which will roll over a man's neck as easily as over a flint."* Nor is it only a case of indifference to the distinction between a man and a flint; the automatically working laws of Nature seem to recognize no distinction between a saint and a sinner, between a man of genius and an imbecile, as in an earthquake or a shipwreck. But the question is whether the world is a place that conduces to the development of personality, and whether the very neutrality of the world may not be another name for justice, which is always im-

* *Autobiography of Mark Rutherford* (9th ed.), p. 30.

partial and allows no room for favouritism or differential treatment. God "maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust," thus does Christ illustrate, by a reference to the impartiality of Nature, the truth that "your Father in heaven is perfect." We shall return to the question of the objectivity of values when we come to our positive statement. It is enough here to say that all idealistic philosophies agree with religion in refusing to interpret truth, beauty, and goodness as accidental by-products resulting from the mechanical clash of molecules and electrons. Beauty, goodness, and truth are so central and significant that we are impelled to use organic rather than mechanical metaphors, and to say of them that they are blossoms whose roots are in the deep subsoil of the world rather than by-products of a machine. They are, in fact, authentic revelations of the character of reality.

II.

In recent years a new form of naturalism has come into vogue, which we venture to call *Psychological Naturalism*. The ground of scientific and still more of popular interest has largely shifted from physical science to psychological science. And just as the older naturalism, by interpreting the universe solely in terms of physical science, reduced the world of spirit into a negligible shadow-land; so now it is coming to be assumed among many of the devotees of what is known as

the "New Psychology" that a psychological explanation of the origin and nature of religious beliefs reduces those beliefs into mere shadows projected into consciousness out of the subterranean caverns of the "unconscious," and thus deprives them of any significance as reflexions or revelations of objective reality. It seems to us that just now the most serious attack on the objective truth of religion comes from this quarter. The bearing of the New Psychology on the Philosophy of Religion is a matter that demands much fuller and abler treatment than it has yet had. The present writer has neither the necessary equipment nor adequate space in this book to do more than indicate briefly the nature of the challenge and how it may be met.

The New Psychology may be said to be a development of points of view which are derived from two sources: (1) the Darwinian doctrine of man's descent from animal ancestors; (2) the still more recent discovery of the "subliminal" or "subconscious" or "unconscious" regions of the mind. As to the first, the doctrine that man is the product of organic evolution implies that there is *mental* as well as physical continuity between him and the higher animals. This was recognized by Darwin, but it only gradually dawned upon psychologists that this was bound to have a revolutionary effect upon their science. Now, however, evolutionary and comparative psychology has come to its own. This means an intensive study of those primary instincts which man has in common with

the animals. It is now seen that these primary instincts are far more important factors in determining human behaviour than was imagined to be the case when psychology was concentrated on the study of the developed rational processes, which are now said to be merely superimposed on the basis of animal appetites and impulses. Still more important is the discovery of the subconscious regions of the mind, for which the chief credit must be given to F. W. H. Myers. Myers's idea of the "subliminal consciousness" was introduced prominently into the Psychology of Religion by William James in his *Varieties*. "Whatever it may be on its *farther* side, the 'more' with which in religious experience we feel ourselves connected is on its *hither* side the subconscious continuation of our conscious life. . . . It is one of the peculiarities of invasions from the subconscious region to take an objective appearance, and to suggest to the Subject an external control." James does not, however, deny the objective existence of the "MORE of the same quality" (which he also calls "God"). He expresses his conviction that "on its *farther* side" it has wider cosmic relations which extend beyond the abysmal deeps of man's own soul, that it is "operative in the universe outside of him," and is "the guarantee of an ideal order that shall be permanently preserved," though he admits that this conviction is but an "over-belief."*

In the modern psycho-analytic school, or rather

* Wm. James, *Varieties*, pp. 508-519.

schools, led by Freud and Jung, the path of research thus suggestively opened out by Myers and James is pursued much more drastically and with a far more scientific and detailed technique. The "unconscious" as the term is used by Freud means that dark region of the mind wherein are buried those elements of experience which have been "repressed" or barred out of consciousness, because they are painful to us or are regarded as illegitimate, and which can only re-enter consciousness indirectly and in disguised forms. But what we thus drive underground does not therefore cease to function. It may find a way of escape from its prison-house by masquerading under an elaborate symbolism, especially in dreams. Dreams are unfulfilled wishes which we have tried to banish from our minds, but which regain entrance in a disguised form when the "censor" is asleep, and for Freud every wish is ultimately sexual. We are here only concerned with the Freudian and Jung's psychology of the unconscious in so far as it bears on the philosophy of religion. This is worked out most elaborately in Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (Eng. trans. 1916), where it is maintained that all religious beliefs are "eroto-genetic"—*i.e.*, sexual in their origin—and are nothing but racial day-dreams produced by the unconscious activity of the *libido* or primitive psychic energy, symbolic phantasy-images of the developing sex-life of the race. The *libido* uses as its material the unconscious memories of childhood with its utter dependence on father and mother, and projects the primitive father-image

and the tender emotions associated with it upon an objectified Father-God. The God-myth is nothing but the repressed wishes of the race finding compensation in symbolic form. It is another case of a wish being father to a thought. Here are some typical sentences from a still more recent work of Jung's: "Man gains a further resource, then, in the unconscious, that maternal womb of creative phantasy." "Dormant in the unconscious there lie reminiscence-complexes of the individual past; above all the parent-complex, which is identical with the childhood-complex in general. Through the sinking of the *libido* into the unconscious, the childhood-complex is reactivated, whereby the reminiscences of childhood, especially the relation to the parents, are again infused with life. From the phantasies proceeding out of this reactivation there dawns the birth of the Father and Mother divinities, and there awakens the religious childlike relations to God." The overwhelming sense of God's "absolute superiority to the conscious will of the subject . . . proceeds from a heaping-up of energy in the unconscious. This *libido* accumulation animates images. . . . Here is the source of the God-idea. For our psychology, . . . God is but a function of the unconscious. . . . The divine effect springs from our own inner self:" The term phantasy "represents a complex that is distinguished from other complexes by the fact that it corresponds with no actual external state of affairs."* It must be

* C. G. Jung, *Psychological Types* (E. Tr. 1923), pp. 144, 156 *f.*, 300 *f.*, 573 (abbreviated).

added, however, that Jung gives a place of high importance and value to "the dynamic principle of phantasy." "What great thing ever came into existence that was not first phantasy?" "It is not the artist alone, but every creative individual whatsoever who owes all that is greatest in his life to phantasy."* Still it remains true that its creations are purely subjective, for "its contents correspond with no external reality."

No one can doubt the supreme importance of the work of Freud and Jung and their followers. It may well prove to be epoch-making, in the sense at least of opening out new fields and new methods of psychological research, quite apart from the permanent value of the actual results so far. As to the latter, the experts are by no means unanimous. Pending further research the mere layman has no alternative but to "wait and see." Probably these theories will have to be pruned of certain exaggerations and obsessions with which they seem to be overweighted. Our brief criticism will scarcely touch the question of their truth or falsity on purely scientific and psychological grounds, but will simply bear on the *philosophical* inference based upon them concerning the objective truth of religious ideas.

The question whether the religious man is holding commerce with a real Other-than-himself though revealed within him, or whether he is naïvely worshipping a mere projection of his own unconscious animal impulses—*i.e.*, communing

* *Op. cit.*, pp. 77, 82.

with his own subliminal self—is surely a supremely important matter for religion. In spite of Jung's eulogy of the creative phantasy, we cannot continue to dwell in a fool's paradise once we have discovered it to be such. Religion takes itself far too seriously to be content with the camouflage of day-dreams which are nothing but *libido* in disguise. Since the psycho-analysist believes in the *value* of "the dynamic principle of phantasy," it were policy for him not to break the news to us that it is phantasy, for when it is known to be such it will cease to be dynamic (at least in the case of religion, though not perhaps in the case of poetry). It is surely a case of "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." Or as Pratt facetiously puts it (where, however, he is not discussing Freud or Jung): "If the subjective value of prayer be all the value it has, we wise psychologists of religion had best keep the fact to ourselves; otherwise the game will soon be up and we shall have no religion left to psychologize about. We shall have killed the goose that laid our golden egg."* Once the psychologist has disillusionized them, men will not continue to worship a God-myth which is but a disguised reflection in the mirror of consciousness of their own unfulfilled desires. They will not keep on pulling strings to which nothing is attached at the other end.

But the fact is, the psychologist who assumes that since all the phenomena of religion can be

* J. B. Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness* (1921), p. 336.

explained in terms of mental processes which he can analyse, therefore religion can be proved to be an illusion, will find himself in an awkward predicament. For in the same way the objective reality of the world around us can be denied. For the psychological analysis of the experience of sense-perception discovers nothing but a subjective process and finds no room for any object to intrude upon it. But it is surely absurd to think that by analysing the experiencing mind we are explaining away the reality of the object experienced. This is a fallacy into which the psychologist naturally falls whenever he forgets that a psychology of the experienc*ing* process is not the same thing as a philosophy of experienc*ed* reality. The question of the validity of experience or the nature of reality is the province of philosophy, not of psychology. To reduce religious ideas to symbols of subconscious desires is not to prove them illusory, for it leaves the question still open whether the universe does or does not correspond with our desires. To trace the psychological history of a belief does not dispense with the question of its truth or falsity, which must be answered on other grounds than those of its origin and history. It is a philosophical commonplace that lowly origin must not be allowed to prejudice the validity or value of the final result. The question of validity must not be confused with that of origin—unless we are prepared to say that the fact that science originated in crude magic invalidates its latest

achievements. The alternative is the adoption of the naturalistic method of interpretation by reduction, or the explanation of the higher in terms of the lower, which we have already seen reason to reject. The point has been well illustrated by a recent writer thus: "It is possible that the Freudians who insist that it [infantile sexuality] is a factor of such importance are in the position of botanists who, having dug round the roots of an oak-tree, have discovered the remains of the acorn from which it grew, and insist that in this alone lies all the significance of the oak; and that the other scientists, who spend their lives in the investigation of the structure of the tree itself, the artists who rejoice in its beauty, and the carpenters who use its wood, are all alike living in a fool's paradise, because they have not realized that the oak is a decayed acorn and nothing more."*

Instead of denying the objective truth of religion on the ground that it is a case of the "wish being father to the thought," it is possible for us, on the contrary, to build up a somewhat strong argument in favour of the ontological significance of human instincts and desires as expressed in the world of behaviour and response. For even our desires result from our reaction to the world and interaction with it, and so can be expected to be, so far as they go, genuine revelations of the nature of the world in which we live. This does not mean that any and every capricious wish must

* R. H. Thouless, *An Introduction to the Psychology of Religion* (1923), pp. 138 *f.*

harmonize with reality, such as the child's desire for the moon as a toy to play with. But experience in the long run inhibits these vain and illusive desires and only allows those to survive which are, at least sufficiently for working purposes, in tune with reality. So far, at any rate, the appetite or demand for God has stood the test. It is significant that an idealistic thinker like Bosanquet should refer sympathetically to the realist Alexander's appreciation of human impulse and emotion as having ontological value. In this connection Bosanquet writes: "The instinctive appetite or demand for God . . . is a proof of the reality of Deity, in the same sort of sense in which hunger is a proof of the existence of food, or the sexual impulse proof of the existence of possible mates. Of course obvious exceptions take place: you may starve; you may die unmated. But *in rerum natura* an instinct implies an object; and if you find a special emotional impulse, such as that of worship and religion, which pervades all sorts of particular experiences, but maintains its unique suggestion and demand throughout them all, you can hardly help recognizing the object of this emotion as at least some peculiar feature of the world."*

III.

We have now briefly to consider another view of the universe—or rather, perhaps, an emotional attitude or mood—which seems to place great

* B. Bosanquet, *Contemporary Philosophy* (1921), p. 67.

difficulties in the way of accepting the truth of the religious postulate. It will be convenient to label it *Pessimism*. To Naturalism the universe is ethically neither good nor bad; it is just neutral, coldly indifferent to merely human values. But to Pessimism the world is positively and fundamentally evil; or, at any rate, evil is so prominent a feature of it, there is in it so much pain and cruelty and wrong, that if it can be said to have a purpose at all it must be a malevolent rather than a benevolent purpose. And here we are confronted with the ancient and ever-present *problem of evil*, which has baffled the deepest minds of all ages. It is a time-worn theme, and we dare not hope to be able in a few pages to say anything fresh about it, or to suggest a new solution of the great enigma. The fact of evil is patent to all. There are at least four kinds of evil in the world—pain, error, ugliness, and sin. These are the direct opposites of the four great values that we might expect to see universally prevalent in a perfect or divinely ordained world—happiness, truth, beauty, goodness. We have frequently referred to the last three as ultimate intrinsic values, which to the religious consciousness are more than mere human or social conventions but are somehow grounded in the nature of things. Happiness or pleasure is not generally regarded as occupying quite the same status (though to the pure hedonist, and often to the "plain man," pleasure is the very meaning and measure of value). Yet a perfect world might (it is alleged) be expected to be a

place of universal happiness, or, at any rate, we might expect a God-governed world to be one in which there would be perfect adjustment between virtue and happiness in the sense that the measure of a man's virtue would necessarily be the exact measure of his happiness. As a matter of fact, the very opposite of these values—pain, error, ugliness, sin—are rampant in human life, that human life which is produced and sustained by the scheme of things said to be created and ruled by God. Nor is it easy to discover in the world as we know it a universal principle of correlation between goodness and happiness. Practically all discussions on the problem of evil deal only with two of these four anti-values—viz., with physical evil (pain or suffering) and moral evil (sin). It will lighten our task if we, too, limit ourselves in the same way, although we suggest that an exhaustive treatment of the subject should include the perfectly legitimate question, how in a world said to be created and sustained by God are *error* and *ugliness* possible? as well as the problems of *suffering* and *sin*.

As to suffering, harrowing pictures might be drawn of the pain and misery that are in the world, much of it apparently undeserved. We remember Tennyson's indictment of Nature as "red in tooth and claw with ravin." With reference to the cruel sufferings which the struggle for existence involves in the animal creation we may quote the words of two well-known thinkers of the Victorian Age. Romanes said: "We find that

more than one-half of the species which have survived the ceaseless struggle are parasitic in their habits, lower and insentient forms of life feasting on higher and sentient forms, we find teeth and talons whetted for slaughter, hooks and suckers moulded for torture—everywhere a reign of terror, hunger, sickness, with oozing blood and quivering limbs, with gasping breath and eyes of innocence that dimly close in deaths of cruel torture." "In sober truth," said J. S. Mill, "nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another are Nature's every-day performances." And who can draw out a catalogue of all the physical and mental ills that human flesh is heir to—not only the large-scale calamities caused by cataclysms such as earthquakes, floods, famines, pestilences, wars, but the innumerable tragedies of private life which are no less painful to those involved, such as poverty, bereavement, disease, madness, and the petty anxieties and worries of daily life? It is such experiences as these in their cumulative effect that have led pessimists of all ages to say that "all is vanity and a striving after wind," that "life is not worth living," or in the words of Horace Walpole, that "life is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel." The reaction of sensitive souls to life's tragedy has often been a feeling of bitterness, despair, rebellion. In such a mood, instead of saying of the world with the complacent God of the Book of Genesis, "Behold, it is very good," men are prone to say that it is demoniacal, Satanic, or that human life,

so far from being full of divine significance, is but "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." But perhaps the chief count in the indictment of the whole scheme of things is the fact of *moral* evil, theologically called "sin." Can a world in which human depravity and wrong-doing are so prevalent, in which "man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn," be thought of as created and governed by a perfectly good and omnipotent God? In view of all these facts it is not surprising that the *mood* of pessimism has sometimes become a definite *philosophy* of pessimism, as in the case of Schopenhauer and in much Oriental speculation. To Schopenhauer not only is life actually an evil thing, but it is inevitably and essentially evil, for to live is to will, to will is to desire, to desire is to feel the want of something, which implies a defect and therefore suffering.

The mystery of evil is indeed profound, and probably no theoretic solution yet offered to the world is adequate. We refuse to believe with some that it is essentially and for ever insoluble, but we may humbly confess that in our present stage of knowledge it passeth understanding, though even now we may have flashes of insight that enable us partly to grasp the meaning of it all. Indeed, the intuitions of the heart may help us to see more deeply and truly into this matter than mere brain-reasoning, though this does not absolve us from the duty of hard and sincere thinking. We need to approach these ultimate

mysteries in the spirit which von Hügel (that deep thinker who thinks with his heart as well as with his brain) commends to a lady in bereavement—the spirit of humility, patience, love, and sincerity, "without which we cannot really advance in these fundamental quests," and the consciousness that mere *clearness* of thought does not count so much in the deepest things as richness, vividness, and fruitfulness of apprehension.* It is necessary to bear in mind that the problem of evil can only arise within the sphere of the religious life. It presupposes the religious point of view, though it challenges it. Apart from a prior belief in the goodness and power of God no issue is raised by the existence of suffering and sin. On the basis, for instance, of the materialistic hypothesis there is no problem of evil. If the world is the sport of blind forces that have no consciousness of what they do, the question why the righteous suffer and the wicked flourish like a green bay-tree has simply no meaning. But on the assumption that God is loving and just and all-powerful the problem of evil becomes acute.

Many theories have been put forth to explain the mystery of evil. One type of theory seeks to explain it by explaining it away—that is, by denying its real existence. Both physical and moral evil are, it is said, from the highest point of view non-existent. The universe in reality is perfectly good. Everything is good just in so far as it

* Baron F. von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion* (1921), chap. iv.

exists, as Augustine put it. Evil is non-existence, illusion, negativity. Pantheistic monism, if it is self-consistent, has no room in its system of reality for evil. For instance, Spinoza identified reality and perfection. Regarded *sub specie æternitatis* everything is good; or, rather, the Infinite Substance which is the only reality is beyond good and evil alike. Good and evil are purely subjective ideas of reflection, and cannot be predicated of ultimate reality, which is a perfect whole. To Hegel also evil is unreal, existing from a partial point of view but disappearing from the point of view of the whole. What seems evil from the limited standpoint is really, in the popular phrase, "good in the making," a necessary stage in the dialectic movement from mere innocence to rational self-determined virtue. Leibniz's world-view is very different from that of Spinoza or Hegel, and he does not say that evil is unreal, but he, too, regards evil as ultimately due to privation or defect. He traces back both physical and ethical evil to what he calls "metaphysical evil," the limitation of being which necessarily belongs to everything less than God, and the imperfections which that limitation involves. The evil which thus from a partial point of view seems a discord, to the enlarged outlook subserves the harmony of the whole. Thus the world in which we live is to Leibniz "the best of all possible worlds," though it is not the best imaginable.

All such theories as these, which in various ways interpret evil as mere privation of good, or as due

to a merely partial point of view, and therefore as not to be counted in the sum of reality, are inadequate as explanations of experience insomuch as they ignore the positive aspect of evil. It is small comfort to the acute sufferer to tell him that his sufferings are nothing but an illusion, or a limitation of being due to his finiteness. Pain is a terrible reality to him who experiences it, and the "higher point of view" of philosophic wisdom is untrue to facts if it ignores the experienced reality of pain. The higher philosophic insight can surely not come by shutting one's eyes to facts as they present themselves within the living consciousness. And the case is still more difficult with regard to moral evil or sin. Pain may indeed be explained (as we shall see) as a means to a higher end. But moral evil violates a principle that is absolute; it seems to be a final flaw in the scheme of things which no higher point of view can revaluate or transmute into a good or turn into a mere negativity. We do not judge of the nature of sin from experiences in which it is a process or movement towards a higher good, but from experiences in which it cannot be resolved or analysed into anything but sin. The fact that a bad action may be providentially overruled for good (as in the case of the crucifixion of Christ, which Christians believe was overruled for the world's good) does not destroy the agent's badness of will. The experiences of *guilt* and *repentance* are unique, irreducible experiences, and as such testify to the fact that, so far from being "good in the making," "sin is

exceeding sinful." It might seem, then, as if sin were a permanent antinomy which admits of no theoretic solution.

Another type of theory is that which frankly accepts the position that the principle of evil has an independent reality, co-ordinate, and perhaps co-eternal, with the principle of the good. This is the dualistic hypothesis, by which the universe is analysed into two essences or principles which are ultimate in the sense that neither can be resolved into the other. It is a view which in various forms frequently prevailed among the ancients. We have it in the religion of Zarathustra, in which there was absolute antagonism between good and evil (or truth and falsehood), symbolized by light and darkness, and represented by the two gods Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, neither of whom could triumph save as the other was destroyed. We have it in Platonism, which attributed to matter an independent and co-eternal reality as the principle of blind necessity in the world and the ultimate source of evil, while the principle of Reason or the Idea of the Good was merely the artificer (not the creator) of the world, limited by the obstructive character of the original world-stuff. We have it in the early Christian centuries in the teaching of the Gnostics and the semi-Gnostic Marcion, who drew a sharp distinction between the good God revealed in Jesus Christ and the inferior or even hostile Demiurge or Creator of the world. And we have it in a modified form in popular Christian and other

theologies, with their doctrine of a personal devil as the father of lies and of all sin. All such theories are attempts to relieve God of all responsibility for the evil that is in the world, but they only save God's goodness by surrendering the idea of His omnipotence and omnipresence, and positing in however disguised a form the idea of a finite God. This is not in itself a sufficient reason for rejecting them. The idea of a finite Deity which modern Pluralists have brought into new prominence is one that we shall discuss in our last chapter. We would agree that there is need of "qualifying the idea of absolute or abstract omnipotence by the recognition of limiting conditions."* But the conditions must be self-imposed, and not imposed by an independent and alien power. The divine limitation must be *self*-limitation, though it is none the less *real* limitation on that account. It is impossible for thought to rest content with the idea of two co-ordinate powers or principles as ultimate, or with tracing the complex world back to two independent sources from one of which flows all that is good and from the other all that is evil. Not by such easy "division of labour" can the problem of evil be solved.

We must now endeavour to state quite briefly the view that commends itself to us. We can only lay down certain general principles, while

* Welsh readers may be referred to a fuller treatment of this matter in my essay on Divine Omnipotence, in *Crist a Gwareiddiad* (1921), chap. vi. See also the last chapter of this book.

admitting that it may be very difficult to see how those general principles are to be applied as solutions of the problem in any and every particular case. The things we shall say may well seem to be somewhat trite. We can only say that, trite as they may seem when regarded in a spirit of cold detachment, in actual experience they have been found by untold multitudes to be true and sustaining.

With regard to suffering, it is a truism which we believe is amply verified in experience that pain has great disciplinary and educational value. Experience supplies us with much evidence in favour of the view that there is at work in the world a transmuting principle by which hardship and suffering are turned into instruments of good, and by an act of faith or by analogical reasoning we may believe that this principle is at work even where there is no empirical proof of it. The mistake of the pessimists is that they allow their attitude to be controlled by a purely hedonistic ideal of life. They assume that the perfect world would be one in which there would be unalloyed happiness. Even judged by that criterion it would seem that the deepest joy is only possible, at least to finite beings, against some background of pain.* A paradise which is all roses without thorns, all sweetness without an ingredient of sorrow, would seem

* *Cf.* Shelley, in his ode "To a Skylark":

"Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is wrought,
Our sweetest songs are those which tell of saddest thought."

to be too insipid for human beings to enjoy for any length of time. But mere enjoyment is not an adequate end of the creative purpose, nor is God (if there be a God) to be thought of as a kind of Santa Claus whose one business is to make His creatures happy. Happiness is, of course, a perfectly legitimate ideal of life; but is it the only one, or is it the highest? Surely not. The real question for us is whether the world as we know it is a fit medium for the development of character. As a matter of fact, it is not in pampered and coddled lives that we find the richest character developed, but in lives that have confronted and overcome difficulties and have come forth out of fiery furnaces purified.

> "Ah! must—
> Designer infinite!—
> Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst limn with it?"

Such was Francis Thompson's agonizing cry, and the question seems to demand an affirmative reply. It would indeed seem as if a whole catalogue of virtues would drop out of a world in which there were no hardships or obstacles to overcome—patience, sympathy, courage, resourcefulness, hope, wisdom, self-sacrifice. In Keats's oft-quoted phrase the world must be regarded as a "vale of soul-making." "Do you not see," asked Keats, "how necessary a world of pain and trouble is to school an intelligence and to make a soul?" Just as a bird cannot fly except in a resisting medium, or as a locomotive cannot move where there is no friction, so the resistance of a physical environment, involv-

ing possibilities of pain and defeat, are necessary conditions of character. And if it be asked why it is so frequently the case that one man has to suffer for another's wrong-doing, we can only say that this, too, seems to enhance morality, for it tends to bind men together in the bonds of social solidarity and helps them to realize that the life of all is involved in the life of each. Christianity has boldly set the sign of the cross—the symbol of vicarious suffering—at the very centre of its gospel, and it represents God not as existing in solitary beatitude, an idle spectator of the world's tragedy of pain and evil, but as Himself the great Sufferer redeeming the world by the way of sacrifice and thus participating in the "sorrow that is not sorrow but delight." For Christianity the tragedy of the cross, instead of being a mere problem, is the very revelation of the sacrificial love which is the inmost heart of reality.

As to moral evil, the problem is more difficult, inasmuch as we cannot assign to it, as in the case of pain, instrumental or disciplinary value. It is of course true that men learn from their moral failures as well as from their physical sufferings, but the moral evil is not thereby transmuted into a moral good. There is a fundamental difference of principle between sin and goodness which makes it impossible for the former to be resolved without remainder to the latter. The only explanation we can offer is that the *possibility* (though not the actuality) of sin is the logical corrolary of moral freedom. There can be no real virtue without at

least the possibility of vice; man would not be capable of good were he not also capable of sin. It is a truism of ethics that morality involves freedom of choice as between live alternatives. The total exclusion of moral alternatives would mean the reduction of the world of human life to the plane of the mechanical. Some there are who would prefer such a mechanical non-moral world to the world of our experience. Huxley, for instance, declared: "I protest that if some great Power would agree to make me think always what is true and do what is right on condition of being turned into a sort of clock . . . I should instantly close with the bargain. The only freedom I care about is the freedom to do right; the freedom to do wrong I am ready to part with on the cheapest terms to anyone who will take it of me." But, as James Ward says, "freedom and clockwork, freedom and yet no choice; clockwork and experience, absolute routine and yet continuous progress in self-knowledge and self-control, are not these flagrant contradictions?"* A world of infallible marionettes might be an amusing pantomime for some supramundane spectators, but it would certainly not be a moral world and would in no way be an improvement on the world as we know it. Yet that seems to be the only real alternative to the system in which we live, which has at any rate the merit of being a school for living and growing souls. The instincts, appetites, impulses, which are transmitted to us by heredity, and the influences

* J. Ward, *Realm of Ends* (1911), p. 373.

which come to us from our environment (be they temptations to evil or inducements to good) are but the raw material of character; they are *for us* neither good nor bad in an ethical sense, and only become so in so far as they are welcomed into our consciousness and transmuted into personal motives. Sin is therefore not an inevitable expression of our native passions fanned by external influences; it is the perversion of our freedom. This is perhaps to over-emphasize the element of *individual* responsibility at the expense of the equally important *corporate* aspect of the moral life. We must not press individual freedom too far. There is a sense in which freewill, sin, redemption, virtue, are social as well as individual facts, and corporate effort is necessary in order to build up the fully moralized world-order. But the fact remains that, whether individual or racial or both, the moral order is from the human side conditioned by choice, effort, conflict.

And the conflict is no mere sham fight, but is the moral equivalent of war. We may not agree with all that William James says in his essay on "Is Life Worth Living?" but there is something within us that responds to such stirring words as these: "If this life be not a real fight, in which something is eternally gained for the universe by (our) success, it is no better than a game of private theatricals from which one may withdraw at will. But it *feels* like a real fight—as if there were something really wild in the universe which we, with all our idealisms and faithfulnesses, are needed to

redeem; and first of all to redeem our own hearts from atheisms and fears. . . . Be not afraid of life. Believe that life *is* worth living, and your belief will help create the fact."* This does not mean that God is a mere idle spectator taking no part in the conflict, that having endowed man with moral freedom he has divested Himself of all further responsibility. It is still "God who worketh in us both to will and to do," even though we have to "work out our own salvation through fear and trembling." This may be the ultimate antinomy of the spiritual life, but we may partly solve it by remembering that God does not work in us by compulsion but by moral suasion. His omnipotence is the omnipotence of love, not of physical force. The divine self-limitation out of respect to human freedom does not mean divine self-annihilation or withdrawal from the arena of human life. God is ever the Captain of our Salvation. He is the wise Master-Builder of the "divine city of spirits" which is in building, and we, if we are faithful to our high calling, are destined to be, in the words of Leibniz, "citizens of the republic of the universe whose monarch is God."

IV.

We have in this chapter discussed certain theories which seem inconsistent with, or to create a presumption against, the truth of the religious postulate. We must now state more positively some

* W. James, *The Will to Believe* (1899), pp. 61 *f.*

reasons that may be advanced in favour of its truth. To some extent positive arguments have already emerged in the course of our criticisms of other views. In a book of this size we cannot state the case in as full a manner as might be desirable. We shall not discuss the three traditional philosophical "proofs" of the existence of God—the Ontological, Cosmological, and Teleological proofs—or the famous criticisms of them by Kant. We must forgo the discussion of the important idea of *purpose* which we had intended to undertake at this stage. Limitations of space compel us to confine ourselves to a brief argument based on the idea of *value*.

We have frequently observed that the question of the truth of the religious world-view is largely the question of the objectivity of our highest values. What, then, are we to say of the values assumed as normative by ethics (the Good), art (the Beautiful), science and philosophy (the True)? Are they mere human conventions or subjective fictions? Or are they in some way predicates of ultimate reality, features of the world's inmost structure? We must, of course, admit that what we have called the anti-values—Sin, Ugliness, and Error—are actual facts in the world of experience, and may appear to have as much claim to represent the nature of things as the values they oppose. On what ground, it may be asked, are we justified in selecting the latter rather than the former as affording the clue to the reality behind phenomena? We may reply that the very distinction between

Good and Evil implies a system of reference or norm by which we approve of the former and disapprove of the latter; and similarly with regard to the distinction between Beauty and Ugliness, Truth and Error. The norm or criterion in each case is supra-individual, trans-subjective, universal; it is not a matter of arbitrary or individual choice.

The objectivity of value is most obvious perhaps in the case of Truth. It is generally agreed (except by sceptics, extreme pragmatists, and panegoists) that truth is in its very nature objective. In knowledge the individual seeks to pass beyond his own private feelings and particular sense-impressions into a world of universal truth which he can possess in common with all other individuals. To say that a thing is true or false is to pronounce judgment on the particular in the light of a universal criterion, or to view the partial in the light of the whole. It may not be so plain why Goodness should not be regarded as merely subjective. It seems so obvious that the distinction between good and evil is purely human, since it is only relevant in reference to human character and conduct, and does not seem applicable to the universe as such. Further, even within human life ethical writers have often identified moral approval and disapproval with the feelings of pleasure and pain or with subjective desire. But such identifications cannot be accepted by the moral consciousness. The moral ideal clearly discriminates between what is pleasant and what is right, and demands that we do the right thing when it is unpleasant

as well as when it is pleasant. Nor is it adequate to say that we approve simply what we desire. For the moral consciousness distinguishes between the desires that ought to be expressed in action and those which in a given situation ought to be suppressed. It approves of some desires (and these not always the strongest) and disapproves of others. There must be some standard other than the strength of the desire by which the desire itself is to be morally judged. Bishop Butler was right when he insisted that the moral law has right even when it has not might, that it has manifest authority even when it has not actual power. Its *de facto* strength in a given situation is not the measure of its *de jure* authority. This points to a universal moral law, or in Kant's phrase, a categorical imperative, which is supra-individual in its authority but with which the moral individual voluntarily identifies himself. Thus the idea of the Good involves a system of reference or criterion which is universal and objective. Kant's theory of the goodwill as something which is absolutely and unconditionally good, good without qualification, a jewel that shines by its own light and not by any borrowed rays, and his view of the universe as a kingdom of ends, a system whose ultimate purpose is the realization of the supreme good in a society of ethical persons—these positions are, we believe, in their essence impregnable, however open to criticism in detail Kant's exposition may be. This means that the universe is a spiritual process adapted to the training of men in

moral goodness as an end in itself, an ultimate value.

Finally, what are we to say of Beauty? It is apparently the most subjective of the three values we are considering. It is proverbial that *de gustibus non est disputandum.* Every individual seems to be his own final court of appeal as to what objects are to be called beautiful or æsthetically satisfying. But surely even here it is not merely a question of individual feeling or private taste. Beauty, like Truth and Goodness, involves a criterion which is absolute and imperative, which is above us yet finds a response within us. Æsthetic judgments may have the significance of objective truth just as scientific and ethical judgments, as the history of art and poetry testifies. No temporary depravity of taste can cause a "pot-boiler" to be really more artistic than one of Turner's masterpieces, or make the one-time popular Martin Tupper a greater poet than Milton or Goethe. Artistic beauty is not the arbitrary or capricious creation of any individual, but is an interpretation of the soul of reality in terms of sense. Thus we may say of all the three values that they are estimated by objective standards which are ultimate in the sense that in the end our minds are compelled to accept them. Of course this does not mean that our conceptions of truth, goodness, and beauty are at any time final, infallible, or incapable of growth. Truth, goodness, and beauty are for us not static entities. They are aspects of an inexhaustible reality dynamically and progres-

sively revealed to us, and as such they are revelations of reality itself.

It may be objected that, while values are in a sense objective and universal, they are so only in reference to humanity. They are supra-individual but not supra-human or cosmic, and cannot be taken as intimations of the nature of things beyond the range of human life. For instance, it may be urged that moral ideas are merely a reflexion of the social order, that the categorical imperative is simply a form of herd-suggestion, that the authority of the moral law is merely the apotheosis of social custom demanding conformity from the individual. But this attempt to make value-judgments a mere expression of social convention is unsatisfactory, inasmuch as it does not explain the possibility of progress. The prophet of a new and higher ethic is not satisfied with the prevalent moral conventions, but feels within him the challenge of a higher imperative than that of social custom. Again, it may be urged, in the manner of Comte, that "although we can eliminate the subjective peculiarities which belong to us as individuals, we cannot rise above the subjectivity which is common to our species as a whole." Comte, as is well known, makes Humanity as a collective entity an object of worship in an otherwise godless world, and refuses to relate human ideals to the larger non-human world, which indeed he tends to regard (like Huxley) as indifferent if not hostile to human values. But Humanity isolated from Nature is a mere abstraction. As we saw in deal-

ing with the problem of knowledge, man is "organic to the world" which gave him birth, and therefore his world of values must form an integral part of the whole system of reality within which he and the physical world alike fall. Man is not an alien but a native citizen of the universe, and when we are looking within him we are looking into the universe itself; in fact, we are looking into the deepest and most fundamental aspect of the universe known to us. When we are contemplating human values we are not gazing "across the margent of the world" at some extra-mundane sphere, we are contemplating the one and only universe from the vantage-ground of what is highest and most significant within it. There must be at the foundation of things a common ground between the causal world with which the scientist deals and the world of values with which the ethical, æsthetic, and religious judgments deal. Where are we to find that common ground except in God?

The belief in the objective validity of value on the one hand, and in the ultimate unity of the causal realm and the realm of ends on the other, seems to imply or demand belief in something very much like the God of religious faith. Our argument is thus twofold. On the one hand, God is necessary as the ground and home of all the highest values we know. Truth, Goodness, and Beauty are three converging lines which find their meeting-point in a Being who is their common fountain-head and in whom the three are but

aspects of the One Divine Life. These three are ultimately one, because they are manifestations of the nature of the one God. On the other hand, He is necessary as the common root of that which actually *is* (the order of Nature) and that which man feels *ought to be* (the order of ideals), and hence as the justification of the belief that that which ought to be is realizable in the actual world. It may be asked, Do not Error, Sin, and Ugliness also need a ground in the nature of things, since they too are facts in the world of experience? We would reply that what we need most of all is a ground or criterion to justify us in disapproving of these. Whatever be the difficulties of accounting for the origin of error, sin, and ugliness (and the difficulties are great), it is evident that, seeing that we inevitably and instinctively condemn them, they cannot claim a place in the system of reality on equal terms with the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, which carry with them the mark of their own authority and authenticity. We needs must find a reason in the nature of things for differentiating between them in this way and for giving them unconditionally a different status in the scale of being. Such a ground or criterion is found in God, conceived as Himself essentially Truth, Goodness, and Beauty in one.

It may be objected that this whole argument is too anthropomorphic, that it is guilty of the provincialism of interpreting the universe as a whole from the standpoint of our own little corner of it. But we believe that there is a true as well

as a crude and indiscriminate anthropomorphism. Indeed, it is impossible for us to think at all except anthropomorphically—*i.e.*, in terms derived from human experience. To take our richest human experiences rather than our meagrest and most neutral experiences as a clue to the deepest nature of reality, to believe that the best in man is continuous with what is most fundamental in the universe, this seems to us to be the right kind of anthropomorphism. It is the anthropomorphic view of God which is also the theomorphic view of man, expressed pictorially in the fine Biblical phrase, "God made man in His own image." In other words, our value-judgments are parts of the self-revelation of Ultimate Reality pulsing within us. Or in the language of poetry (if we may make our own use of Shelley's fine words without committing ourselves to his somewhat thin pantheism), both the "loveliness" of nature and man's high aspirations are due to—

> "the one Spirit's plastic stress . . .
> Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
> To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
> And bursting in its beauty and its might
> From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light."

A WHOLE crowd of outstanding problems are still left on our hands, pressing their claims as candidates for admittance into this our final chapter. Reasons of space compel us to reduce the candidates to a strictly limited "short list." We have arrived at a stage where a systematic metaphysic of reality, if only in outline, might be attempted. Our argument in the last chapter was in the main apologetic. It was a defence of the religious postulate as being in harmony with the nature of things beyond man's own subjective life. But there is need of a fuller and more constructive statement of a philosophy of the universe which shall do justice both to the implications of religious experience and to the data derived from all other sources or kinds of experience. And here especially do we see the Philosophy of Religion (as we indicated in our first chapter) merging in speculative Philosophy in general. Of course, no comprehensive metaphysic of reality can be attempted in one chapter of a small book, even if otherwise we were capable of it. We shall, however, briefly consider certain crucial problems which come within the scope of such a metaphysic.

The end of last chapter left us at the point of *affinity* between God and man. We spoke of man as made in the divine "image," and of God as the

ultimate ground and home of the highest human values. But the sense of kinship is only one element in the religious consciousness of God. This sense of affinity and intimate relationship is ever balanced by the feeling of a great *distance* between God and man and by the sense of something in God which is unique and incommunicable. The idea of God is associated with exaltedness, sublimity, ineffable majesty, holiness (in the original Hebrew sense of "apartness"), transcendence, superhuman *power*—what theologians have called God's "metaphysical" as distinguished from His "ethical" attributes. As we saw in our earlier chapters, religious experience has from the beginning been deeply tinged with the emotion of awe in the presence of some mysterious Power. In the higher religions, too, God is regarded as the ultimate source not only of values but of power, not only of right but of might, and the relation of God to man is thought of not only as that of son to Father, but as that of creature to the Uncreated.

And here we are led to such questions as these: How far is the idea of God's power to be pressed? Does it mean omnipotence in the full sense of the word? Is His power so overwhelming and all-inclusive as to leave no room for any other, or is it in some way *limited* power? If limited, what is the limiting medium or agent, and what is its source? If unlimited, it would seem that it can scarcely be called "power" at all; for where there is absolutely no resistance, power is superfluous,

if not meaningless. We seem, then, to be left with the idea of One Being, an indivisible, all-inclusive Absolute, than which there is no other, or within which all things are embraced. Or the alternatives may be stated thus: Assuming, as a result of our previous argument, that wherever there is intrinsic value we have a manifestation of the divine, what are we to say of the rest of the universe? Is God limited to the realm of ideal values, to the exclusion of the vast areas of non-values (*e.g.*, the immense interstellar spaces, and the non-moral physical forces at work in all the vast worlds in space) which forms so large a part of the actual universe? Or does He comprehend *all* things within Himself, including what from our human point of view we may distinguish as values, non-values, and anti-values? On the one side it may be held that God is the ideal tendency in things—the rest of the universe being, so to speak, the environment within which He strives for the realization of His increasing purpose. On the other side it may be urged that He is the all-inclusive Absolute, the Totality of Things regarded as one comprehensive system without environment. What, again, is the status of human persons within the system of the universe? Are they real individuals existing, so to speak, in their own right, or are they but modes or functions of a single Absolute Reality, the only true Individual there is or can be? These questions seem to converge on one main issue. Is the God of religion identical with the Absolute of philosophy,

or are we to think of God as in some sense finite—ultimate indeed for religion, but for philosophy merely a kind of "halfway house" (to put it crudely) between the finite and the Infinite? We are thus face to face with the ultimate problem which may be variously described as the problem of the Absolute and God, of the One and the Many, of Immanence and Transcendence, of Eternity and Time, of the Infinite and the Finite, of the Universal and the Particular. It is an ancient problem, but owing to the recent revival of Pluralism and the theory of a finite God, and the modern reaction from the idea of a static Deity, it has once more become acute. We must discuss critically the two main tendencies of thought in relation to these matters (the monistic and the pluralistic) and indicate briefly the direction in which our own thoughts are moving.

I.

We begin with the type which is, on the whole, the more characteristic of modern philosophy up to comparatively recent times—viz., those theories of the Absolute which are *Monistic or Pantheistic* in character. This type is represented in antiquity by the Eleatic school (Xenophanes and Parmenides), and is especially characteristic of Oriental thought (as in Brahmanism, with its doctrine of Brahmă as absolute reality and of the temporal and finite world as *maya* or illusion). We must confine ourselves, however, to modern and Western thought.

Spinoza is the first great absolutist thinker of modern Europe. To Spinoza God is identical with the Absolute, or, to use his own phrase, with the Infinite Substance which is the one and only reality. As is well known, he made the Cartesian dualism of thought and extension his starting-point, but transformed Descartes's two ultimate substances into one Infinite Substance with thought and extension as its attributes. There is only one self-subsistent being. Particular thinking beings and particular extended things are but transient modes of the eternal, immutable, unitary world-ground. Diversity, the self-dependence of particular beings, freedom, time, change, development, all these are appearances or even illusions. The Substance of Spinoza is exclusively a principle of identity, not of difference. There is nothing to explain why the unity should even in appearance be broken up into multiplicity, why the Infinite should appear in the guise of innumerable finites, why this world of illusion should be here at all. It has been well said that the Substance of Spinoza is like the lion's den, to which many paths lead, but from which no paths lead back. The equation God = Substance = Nature means that nothing is possible save the actual, and nothing is actual save the necessary. It banishes all distinctions of better and worse, for whatever is, is good. There can be no sin or evil, except as mere figments of human thought, for the things we call evil are constituents of the Whole and as such contribute to its perfection (that is, its completeness). Everything is

necessary in its appointed place within the Whole. Men's desires and volitions are treated by Spinoza, "*more geometrico*," as if they were just lines, planes, and solids. There is no room here for individual initiative, for movement, or for time. In Bergson's phrase, time *is* nothing because it *does* nothing. All is eternally complete, like the truths of mathematics, which do not *become*, but *are*. Here is indeed a "block universe." William James calls the universe of Hegel "the absolute block whose parts have no loose play,"* but the description is even more apt if applied to Spinoza's universe. We are well aware that in these few sentences we cannot do justice to the sublime elements in the teaching of this single-minded saint of the higher thought, the "holy, rejected Spinoza" of Schleiermacher's eulogy, Novalis's "God-intoxicated man." His thought—or shall we not rather say his vision?—is greatest where he breaks through the formal limitations of his monistic logic and follows the higher intuitions which set the soul free. But though his system, looked at from one point of view, culminates in a lofty mysticism in which the soul seeks to realize its freedom in union with the Whole, and finds its highest life in the "intellectual love of God which is part of the love wherewith God loves Himself," looked at from another point of view it lapses into sheer naturalism or "polite" materialism (if we may vary Schopenhauer's phrase), for it reduces the realm of ends and

* Wm. James, *The Will to Believe*, p. 292.

values into a rigid determinism in which moral distinctions cease to have meaning. He identifies God with Nature, which, though it be spelt with a capital N, becomes, under his analysis, a mechanical system wherein the soul is but a reflex activity mirroring a natural process. Reality is too rich and complex to be imprisoned within the rigid walls of Spinoza's monism, and the solution he offers is too concise and meagre to do justice to all the facts. We have argued for the view that moral and other values are ultimate constituents of reality, and for that reason we cannot accept the theory that makes the universe, viewed *sub specie æternitatis*, a system which is "beyond good and evil."

We pass on to a more recent form of monism, generally known as *Absolute Idealism*, which until recently dominated the British and American Universities and still has great influence. Its master is Hegel, who evolved one of the most ambitious and elaborate schemes of thought that ever came forth out of the brain of man. It has this in common with all forms of monistic idealism, that it treats the finite world and finite spirits as differentiations of the one all-inclusive Absolute. But it differs from them in its insistence on the idea of logical development as essential to the very being of the Absolute. Like Spinoza, Hegel regards the universe as a unitary and internally complete being. But whereas Spinoza's Substance is conceived statically after the manner of geometrical categories, what we have in Hegel is the

dynamic self-evolution of the Absolute Idea after the manner of a living Spirit. In Hegelianism we have, so to speak, the infusion of Heracleitean flux into the very heart of Eleatic Being. Hegel rejected his predecessor Schelling's bare principle of identity, on the ground that it reduced the Absolute into "monotony and abstract universality"—a kind of eternal "night in which all cows are black"—and discovered a living principle of differentiation at the very heart of identity. This principle of differentiation within the unity of the Absolute he interpreted in terms of what he called the dialectic movement of concepts (on the assumption that the concepts and categories of human thought are not simply psychic facts in the experience of the individual or of the race, but are constituents of objective reality). Concepts for Hegel are not static self-contained entities, as in the ordinary Aristotelian logic based on the law of identity ($A=A$), but are ever passing beyond themselves into each other by their own immanent dialectic ($A>B>C$). He found in every finite conception an internal self-contradiction whereby it is driven beyond itself in search of a harmonizing principle. Every notion suggests its own opposite, just as (to give a few easy and obvious instances) white suggests black, day implies night, good supposes evil, joy posits sorrow, liberty implies necessity. But thought cannot rest with contradiction as if it were ultimate. The same immanent logic that leads from thesis to antithesis leads also to a synthesis or principle

of reconciliation whereby the contradiction is resolved into a higher unity. But that unity, once attained, again suggests or implies its own opposite, and again the internal antagonism is transcended in a still higher and more inclusive unity. And so the dialectic process goes on, culminating in the ultimate synthesis, the Absolute Spirit, within which, indeed, all contradictions fall, but by which they are all transcended in a comprehensive Unity. Thus the whole realm of thought (which to Hegel is also the realm of reality) is riddled through and through with contradictions as between concepts which are ever at war with each other (reminding us of Heracleitus's dictum that "war is the father of all things"), but which by their very collisions are ever contributing to a profounder peace than would otherwise be possible —a peace which is not the victory of either side over the other, but the survival of both on terms which reconcile their apparent incompatibilities, and which comes not by way of compromise, but by way of comprehension. The Absolute is the entire system of internal discords transmuted into ever richer harmonies and into the harmonious unity of the Whole. It is the entire process by which the storm and stress of the parts are transformed into the perfect peace and repose of the Totality of Things. The evolution of the universe is thus identical with the logical self-evolution of the Absolute, outside of which there is nothing. All finite things exist only as moments or stages within the process whereby the Absolute comes to

know and realize itself. And there can be no doubt that Hegel identifies the Absolute of his philosophy with the God of religion. Philosophy is to him the rational explanation of the true content of religious faith, and the only difference between the Absolute and God is that the former is ultimate reality interpreted in terms of pure thought, whereas the latter is the *same* reality represented pictorially—*i.e.*, in terms of imagination and emotion. And not only does he intend his Absolute to be one and the same with God, but he even makes an attempt, strained and far-fetched, it is true, to force his idea of the Absolute or God into the framework of the Christian dogma of the Trinity, with the aid of his usual formula of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The Absolute as pure Idea, eternally self-identical (thesis), he equates with God the Father. The Absolute as eternally objectified in Nature, ever distinguishing itself as object from itself as subject, ever passing out of its infinite internality into finitude and externality (antithesis), this he identifies with God the Son. The Absolute as the return of the object to the subject in the unity of Spirit, whereby the particular or temporal is reconciled with the universal and eternal (synthesis), this is God the Holy Ghost. But these three are one. The life of God and the history of the universe are one and the same thing viewed from two different standpoints. It is just the logical self-evolution of the Absolute Idea.

No one can deny the stupendous range and impressiveness of Hegel's doctrine of the Absolute,

of which the above is, of course, but the merest outline. It is a most serious and strenuous attempt to work out the true idea of *the universe as a significant whole*, and to eliminate from the world every trace of contingency, irrationality, or whatever might appear even in the least degree to make it a multiverse rather than a universe. It can also claim great practical value in that it meets man's deep longing for stability amidst change, offers a rounded completeness in a world of fragmentary experiences and many apparent imperfections, and seems to impart—

> "Authentic tidings of invisible things,
> Of ebb and flow, and ever during power,
> And central peace subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation."

But in other respects it fails to satisfy the demands of mind and heart. It seems, indeed, to give a perfect world, in the sense at least of a rounded whole, "a spherical system with no loose ends hanging out for foreignness to get a hold upon."* But this seems to give us nothing better than a "block universe" again. It is true that Hegel discards static categories and lays great stress on the idea of development. But according to one main line of thought in his philosophy, the development is merely a logical and not an historical one; in other words, it is purely formal and schematic and does not involve any real strenuousness or output of energy. It costs no effort on the part of the Absolute for a logical

* Wm. James, *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909), p. 103.

concept to evolve its own opposite or for both to generate a higher synthesis. They are but momenta or phases of a timeless reality. Conflicts are explained by the mutual contradictoriness of concepts. But conflict between disembodied thought-entities involves no real physical or psychical wear and tear. "Bloodless categories" have no blood to shed, hence the battle is nothing more than a sham fight and its issue a foregone conclusion. There is, after all, at the heart of things no real flux as we know it in experience, for the movement is purely dialectical. All this arises from Hegel's severe and one-sided intellectualism. His world is but a network of logical relations. It is a world of ideas which have been so universalized as to be cut away from their living roots in psychic experience and to become empty abstractions. The Absolute has no history and never comes out into the open on the field of human experience. From the point of view of the Eternal Being (the true point of view), time and history are illusions.

We are well aware that there is another line of thought in Hegel which is difficult to reconcile with the above. At times no one has a greater sense of the importance of history than he. He speaks impressively of "the tremendous labour of world-history" patiently undertaken by the World-spirit "in the long extent of time." Time is real at least in the sense that it is the field within which the Absolute comes to itself and attains full self-consciousness. But the other equally fundamental

side of his teaching reduces history into a spectacular show in which—

> "We are no other than a moving row
> Of visionary Shapes that come and go
> Round with this Sun-illumined Lantern held
> In Midnight by the Master of the Show."

The following passage makes this especially clear: "Within the range of the finite we can never see or experience that the End has been really secured. The consummation of the infinite End, therefore, consists merely in removing the illusion which makes it seem yet unaccomplished. The Good, the absolutely Good, is eternally accomplishing itself in the world, and the result is that it need not wait upon us, but is already by implication, as well as in full actuality, accomplished. This is the illusion under which we live. . . . In the course of its process, the Idea creates that illusion by setting an antithesis to confront itself, and its action consists in getting rid of the illusion which it has created."* Here the word "illusion" four times repeated leaves no room to doubt that the conflicts of life and history are but appearances of an eternally complete Absolute which has no unfulfilled purposes or unsolved problems and which "needs not wait upon us." But, as Pringle-Pattison says in commenting on this passage, this is "to paralyze our energies at their source; if the antagonisms of the moral life are not real, then we have no standard of reality left." Such a

* Hegel, *Encyclopædia*, section 212 (quoted by A. S. Pringle-Pattison, *Idea of God*, p. 412).

theory provides no satisfactory status for individual persons. Individuals like ourselves shrink into the position of mere adjectives of the Absolute, which alone has substantival reality. The universe is reduced into an impersonal logical process of which human persons are merely the foci. The mechanism of the thought-process tends to absorb into itself all psychical inwardness, and with it all spiritual content. Thus man becomes a mere passive tool wielded by the Absolute, rather than an active co-operator and partner with God in the spiritual enterprise. And the swallowing up of the individual by the Universal leads to the annihilation of ethical values. Viewed from the standpoint of Eternal Being, there can be no evil or sin. Everything is good in its place. A consistent absolutism cannot but regard so-called sins as in some way necessary constituents of the perfect Whole. The attitude of the Absolute must be one of complacent and genial tolerance of things as they are, and we cannot think of anything as disturbing its unruffled felicity. And likewise whosoever would contemplate the course of things from the standpoint of the Absolute must cultivate the mood of satisfied acquiescence in the world as it is. "The insight," said Hegel, "to which philosophy is to lead us is, that the real world is as it ought to be." This accords with his famous statement, "What is rational is real, and what is real is rational." Here again we have a "spherical system with no loose ends," a closed circle in which the ideal and the real

coincide, and there is nothing really unaccomplished. Obviously this is a view which is fatal to the idea of progress, and which gives no standing-ground from which to criticize things as they are. It is true that in self-defence Hegel sought by qualifications and explanations to avoid these conclusions in their logical crudeness. Yet we believe the foregoing statements fairly represent the general trend and purport of his teaching. And as this theory is morally enervating, so it is speculatively unsatisfying. It leaves unanswered the question, Why should Absolute Perfection, to which there is nothing "unaccomplished," delight in creating the illusion of imperfection? How is Perfection in general to be reconciled with even the appearance of many particular imperfections?

Hegel, we have said, identifies his Absolute with God. But we cannot accept the view that a Being which is a mere apotheosis of an impersonal logical process, or which is identical with the whole system of things or with the process of human evolution, and which supplies us with no criterion whereby we may distinguish what *is* from what *ought to be*, is the same as what religion means by God. Hegel's mind seems to oscillate between two ideas of God or the Absolute. According to the first, God is the Absolute existing timelessly in static perfection. According to the second, He is identical with the process of human development. The first view (though there will always be people to whom it will appeal) is becoming more and more alien to the progressive thought

of to-day, with its strong reaction from the idea of a static Deity dwelling in imperturbable felicity, and its demand for a God who shall function dynamically in history. The second view—which makes the history of the Absolute one with the history of human development in a way which implies that God only attains self-consciousness in man—was more unambiguously accentuated by those of his followers who are known as the "Hegelians of the Left." It is unsatisfactory from the point of view of theistic religion in that it does away with the self-existence and independent reality of the Deity, identifies God with man's thoughts about Him, and makes the communion of man with God to be nothing but man's communion with himself or with the progressive spirit of the race.

Later developments of Absolute Idealism in Great Britain and America reveal the profound influence of the master mind of Hegel, together with much independent and exhaustive rethinking of the whole problem. Men like T. H. Green, John and Edward Caird, Josiah Royce, F. H. Bradley, and Bernard Bosanquet, far from being mere parrot-like rehearsers of the thoughts of Hegel, or of their other master, Kant, must be honoured as great original thinkers. But while they outgrew Hegel in many technical details, they were still inspired by his great central vision of the Whole in the parts and of the parts finding their truth and meaning only in their place within the Whole.

Bradley's theory of the Absolute is in many ways more akin to Spinoza's than to Hegel's. He makes little or no use of the Hegelian principle of the self-development of the Absolute through time, and carries on a vigorous polemic against the reality of time "as such." The Absolute, he repeatedly declares, is timeless, and has in itself no history or progress. "Nothing perfect, nothing genuinely real, can move. The Absolute has no seasons, but all at once bears its leaves, fruit, and blossoms."* The attitude which this view of things encourages is that of the undisturbed contemplation of the universe *sub specie æternitatis*, after the manner of Spinoza. But his principle of non-contradiction or internal harmony as the absolute criterion of truth and reality is nothing but Hegel's "higher synthesis" by which contradictions are harmonized. On one important point relevant to our present discussion he differs both from Spinoza and from Hegel—he sharply distinguishes the Absolute from God, while admitting that the idea of God tends to pass into that of the Absolute. "If you identify the Absolute with God, that is not the God of religion. If you separate them, God becomes a finite factor in the Whole. . . . Short of the Absolute, God cannot rest, and having reached that goal, he is lost and religion with him. . . . We may say that God is not God till He has become all in all, and that a God which is all in all is not the God of religion.

* F. H. Bradley, *Appearance and Reality* (1893, 2nd ed. reprinted 1902), p. 500.

God is but an aspect, and that must mean an appearance, of the Absolute."* Similarly, Bradley writes in his later book: "For me the Absolute is not God. God for me has no meaning outside of the religious consciousness, and that essentially is practical. The Absolute for me cannot be God, because in the end the Absolute is related to nothing, and there cannot be a practical relation between it and the finite will. When you begin to worship the Absolute or the Universe, and make it the object of religion, you in that moment have transformed it. It has become something forthwith which is less than the Universe." "A personal God is not the ultimate truth about the Universe." This does not mean that the idea of God's personality is not relatively true. "Whatever ideas really are required in practice by the highest religion are true. In my judgment their truth is not contradicted by metaphysics, so long only as they will not offer themselves as satisfying our last intellectual demands." "The highest Reality, so far as I see, must be super-personal. At the same time, to many minds practical religion seems to call for the belief in God as a separate individual. And where truly that belief is so required, I can accept it as justified and true, but only if it is supplemented by other beliefs which really contradict it." Thus "there is a fundamental inconsistency in religion."†

* *Op. cit.*, pp. 447 *ff.*

† Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality* (1914), pp. 428, 432 *f.*, 436.

In spite of the marvellous subtlety and energy of Bradley's arguments, it is impossible for either philosophy or religion to rest satisfied with the unstable position he has arrived at. A God who is personal and finite, but without fixed boundary of being to prevent Him from passing over into the infinite and super-personal Absolute and thereby ceasing to be, a God who cannot be identified with the Absolute nor yet separated from it, a religious belief which is justified and true provided it is supplemented by other beliefs which contradict it, such is the last word of wisdom of a philosophy which set out to solve all contradictions in an all-inclusive harmony. There surely cannot be this incurable contradiction between the higher religion and the higher philosophy. Our religious and our intellectual needs must ultimately find their satisfaction at the same source. Religion cannot be content with worshipping a Supreme Being who is discovered not to be supreme at all, but to be an appearance of a greater and more ultimate Being. This view, if taken seriously, would mean a kind of idolatry, a new form of Arianism, the worship of a demi-god or of something less than the ultimate *fons et origo* of all being. It implies the idea of something behind and above God, like the Greek idea of an omnipotent Fate to which even Zeus was subject, or of some primary plasm of reality out of which God and man alike have emerged. Nor does it appear clear to what extent Bradley's God is intended to have ontological

status. Is He supposed really to exist anywhere in the universe? Has He a being for Himself as well as an appearance for us? Bradley's doctrine of degrees of reality prevents him, as he admits, from giving a plain Yes or No to this question.* But in spite of his assurance that, though God is not ultimately real (for only of the Universe as a whole can that be said), He is yet emphatically "more real than you or myself," yet the general impression left on one's mind is that He is an unsubstantial theophany or ontophany which may at any moment be withdrawn into and lost in the Absolute. And if the status of God within reality is uncertain, still more insecure is that of finite individuals like ourselves. It is denied that "in the Absolute finite centres are maintained and respected"; rather "all finite things are there transmuted and have lost their individual natures." In the Absolute "we have an all-pervasive transfusion with a reblending of all material." "The plurality of souls in the Absolute is appearance, and their existence not genuine."† And as a compensation for the "fundamental inconsistency" of the religious and all other forms of human consciousness, we have an empty, abstract, and inscrutable Absolute, which has no content continuous with anything we can identify in human experience, which has no history, no life, no movement, which we cannot properly call

* *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 448.
† *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 529, 305.

beautiful or moral or true, which has no quality that we can know except a purely formal and barren self-consistency. When Bradley gives us richer and more positive results than these (as he frequently does), it is because his insight often breaks through the limits of his own logic.

Space forbids us to discuss the important contributions to the doctrine of Absolute Idealism made by Bernard Bosanquet, especially in his Gifford Lectures, *The Principle of Individuality and Value* (1912) and *The Value and Destiny of the Individual* (1913). His doctrine is similar in its main features to that of Bradley, but deserves to be considered on its own merits. He insists that there can be only one true or complete Individual—viz., the Absolute—which, like Bradley, he refuses to identify with the God of religion. Nor can we discuss the version of idealism given by Royce, who certainly tried to do more justice to the principle of personality than most other absolutists—or the glowing restatement of it by Henry Jones in his posthumously published Gifford Lectures, not to mention other thinkers who are more or less in the Hegelian tradition. Both Royce and Henry Jones differ from many of their fellow-idealists, but agree with Hegel, in that they equate God and the Absolute. Absolute Idealism gives ample scope for a wide range of individual differences, for it is a spirit rather than a dogma. But in all its forms it is characterized by a sustained attempt to see reality as a unified self-determined whole to which all things are

organic, and by the refusal to accept any fragmentary or isolated piece of experience as affording the clue to the nature of that reality.

With this endeavour to comprehend the universe as a significant whole we have every sympathy. To Tennyson the "flower in the crannied wall" is so integral to the whole system of things that to understand what the flower is, "root and all, and all in all," is to "know what God and man is." But Absolutism seeks to understand the flower from the point of view of the whole, and not the whole in the light of the flower. How, then, are we to know the universe as a whole except by accepting for all it is worth the positive witness of the various portions we have actually experienced? Similarly this philosophy fails to do justice to *human* and *personal values*, as well as to the universe in its totality, because it regards these values as fragmentary experiences which are transmuted beyond all recognition in the totality of things, instead of accepting frankly the highest values we experience as the best available clue to ultimate reality. The more fruitful method is to start from the concrete world and transfer to the Absolute the most significant and revealing features of our experience. But the absolutist philosophy takes as the organizing principle of knowledge "the empty form of totality" arrived at by a kind of *via negativa* after the fashion of the mystics, and ends by swamping all finite persons and things in the abyss of the Absolute. It is, of course, a sound principle that the individual can only find

his true meaning within the context of the universal. It is the very aim and purpose of religion itself to bring the individual life into tune with the infinite. But this does not mean depriving the individual of his uniqueness and permanent value. It is, on the contrary, the very condition on which the individual can attain fulness and abundance of life. The universe respects the individual life and lavishes its energy in its production and maintenance. There is, indeed, a force in the universe working for an ever richer and more inclusive unity, integration, co-ordination, making for a totality in which all individuals shall become part of a harmonious whole. But side by side with that tendency, and as part of the same cosmic process, there is a tendency making for greater individuation, fashioning personalities with an inner life of their own marked by an ever increasing intensity and fulness. The highest kind of unity is not the static unity of a solitary, self-centred, self-determined Absolute, but the dynamic unity of a *society* of souls realizing their highest destiny in love and in mutually enriching fellowship, a fellowship which is only possible where each has a unique inner life of his own and respects the individuality of others, but yet where each, not loses, but finds, himself in others. God Himself is love and needs such a society. Such at least is the teaching of Christianity, which declares the consummation of the divine purpose to be the establishment of the Kingdom of God which shall also be the Family of the Universal Father. Here

individual personality is not a negligible feature of the world, but necessary to its very idea. Here at any rate is a richer unity than the unity of the monistic or pantheistic ideal, in which the Absolute is a kind of cosmic Leviathan devouring both God and man and all other finite things, until there is nothing left—except the Leviathan! We know that absolutists themselves are from time to time trying to feel their way towards the richer kind of unity, and that is a welcome feature. But they need to set a higher value on the *Many* as well as to respect the claims of the *One*. Here, too, there is need of a "higher synthesis."

II.

We turn now to the consideration of certain theories which advocate the claims of the Many as against the One of the pantheists and absolutists. Such theories may be grouped together under the name of *Pluralism*. In our brief survey of some important pluralistic systems we shall be chiefly interested in such questions as these: Is the status assigned to God and to man respectively one that satisfies the demands at once of philosophical thought and of the religious life? How far does Pluralism involve the idea of a finite God, and is that idea one with which we can rest satisfied? And we shall have to consider whether a thorough and consistent Pluralism is possible at all, whether any pluralistic theory which is to make any sense at all does not imply some unifying or monistic principle or other, however vague or formal. If

a principle of unity has to be conceded, should that unity be posited as an original basis on which all things are built, or else as an ultimate goal towards which all things are tending? And what is the relation of that unifying principle to God?

Pluralism stands for the philosophical outlook of those who are more impressed by the multiplicity and variety in the world than by any underlying principle of unity or identity. And in its idealistic or spiritualistic form (the form of pluralism with which alone we are here concerned) it regards the world as made up of a vast number of spiritual units or souls, free, independent, self-determined. These individual minds, so far from being (as in monism) mere modes or appearances of one all-inclusive Reality, are themselves the ultimate constituents of reality and exist, so to speak, in their own right. The classical type and fountain-head of all modern pluralism (in its panpsychic form) is the *Monadology* of Leibniz, which was the reaction from Spinoza's monism. For Spinoza's One Infinite Substance Leibniz substituted a plurality of independent finite substances, meaning by "substance," not (as Descartes and Spinoza) something static and inert, but that which is essentially dynamic and active. These individual substances he called monads, which he regarded as self-sufficient centres of psychic energy after the pattern of the human soul, containing within themselves the source of all their own activities, unfolding from within themselves alone their whole experience and history. Here the material world

as such disappears and gives way to a vast community of minds or souls of varying grades of perfection, from the lowest-grade soul which the physicist calls the atom to the highest soul, God, the Monad of monads. Thus the whole universe and every part of it swarms with life. "Every portion of matter may be conceived as like a garden full of plants and like a pond full of fish. But every branch of a plant, every member of an animal, every drop of its juices, is also such a garden or such a pond. . . . There is therefore nothing fallow or sterile or dead in the universe."* Since it is of the very nature of a soul that its activities are spontaneous and not controlled from without, it follows that the monads cannot directly act upon one another or influence each other. This is expressed pictorially by Leibniz in the famous sentence, "The monads have no windows through which anything may come in or go out" (*ibid.*, § 7). "The natural changes of the monad come from an internal principle, because an external cause can have no influence upon its inner being" (§ 11). It would seem that this view leads to sheer chaos and anarchy, a multiverse in which there are as many worlds as minds, each monad being (in Leibniz's words) "a world by itself, independent of everything else except God."† But the qualifying phrase "except God" indicates the way in which an attempt is made to save the situation. For though the finite monads are completely inde-

* Leibniz, *Monadology*, §§ 67, 69.

† Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics* (§ xiv.).

pendent of each other, they are not independent of the Supreme Monad. They are ultimately dependent on the will of God, through whose "intervention" the unity and harmony of things is preserved. All the monads owe their existence every moment to Him; they are "the continual fulgurations of the divinity from moment to moment." Moreover, when changes occur in one monad, corresponding changes are effected in the others, so that the equilibrium of the whole is maintained. Thus *indirectly—i.e.*, through the mediation of God—the monads act upon each other as members of a coherent system. Though they have no windows, yet "every monad is a mirror of the universe according to its own fashion." There is thus between them a "pre-established harmony" in accordance with which each expresses one and the same universe from its own special point of view. Thus the unity of the universe is saved, but only at the expense of the absolute independence and spontaneity of the monads, which are now seen to be controlled from above and to be foreordained to express the universe as a whole. The fact is, absolute and unqualified Pluralism is impossible. If we are to retain our sanity, we must in some way or other recognize the unitary aspect of the world as a system of reality in which things somehow cohere. Plurality, to be intelligible, must ever have reference to some background of unity. The question for us here is, What place does Leibniz assign to God within the whole system of things? He is

the absolute ground of the world-unity. Although there are passages in which God seems to be only the highest monad, differing from the others, not in kind, but in degree of perfection, on the whole He occupies a quite unique place in the system as "the ultimate unity or the original simple substance, of which all created or derivative monads are the products," and which alone can act upon the other monads directly. Here there can be no question of His being merely *primus inter pares*, subject to limitations like finite minds. "The supreme substance, which is unique, universal, and necessary, with nothing independent outside of it . . . must be incapable of limitation and must contain as much reality as possible"* It is not from Leibniz that later pluralists have derived the idea of the finiteness of God. Here, indeed, his position is not far removed from that of Spinoza himself. But this must not blind us to the suggestiveness and value of his emphasis on the principle of individuality and freedom.

Later Pluralists have modified Leibniz's system on important points. For instance, they have rejected his highly artificial doctrine of Pre-established Harmony and his denial of the possibility of direct interaction between finite spiritual beings. And there is a tendency among modern Pluralists to assert that God must in some sense be regarded as finite—*i.e.*, that the autonomy and freedom of finite centres of experience imply that God Himself is in some way limited by such

* *Monadology*, § 40.

beings. Perhaps the nearest recent approach to the Leibnizian monadology is the "uncompromising Pluralism" of Howison, with its "universal World of Spirits, every one of whom is free—that is, independently self-active, self-moved from within, and none operated either directly or indirectly from without by any other"—a world in which all spirits are underived, self-subsistent, eternal, constituting together an "Eternal Republic," and the unity of which is the result of "spontaneous harmony from within and not of productive and executive domination from without." The status of God in this Eternal Republic is thus described: "The circle of self-thinking spirits has God for its central Light, the Cynosure of all their eyes; *He* is if *they* are, *they* are if *He* is; but the relation is freely mutual, and He only exists as *primus inter pares*, in a circle eternal and indissoluble."* Less Leibnizian but equally uncompromising in its hostility to monism is the pluralism of William James, who expresses his preference for a universe with ragged edges and loose connection of parts to a closely knit monistic universe. He rejects what he calls the "*all*-form" of being advocated by the philosophy of the absolute, in favour of "a distributive form of reality, the *each*-form." "Nothing includes everything, or dominates over everything." "Each part of the world is in some way connected, in some other ways not connected with its other parts." The

* G. H. Howison, *The Limits of Evolution* (1901), pp. 328, 359, etc.

assertion of God's finiteness is in William James definite and unqualified. God is "only one of the eaches" of the distributive world. He and we stand outside of each other. The only way of escape from the "block-universe eternal and without history . . . is to be frankly pluralistic, and assume that the superhuman consciousness, however vast it may be, has itself an external environment, and consequently is finite." If the Absolute exists at all (and on this point James's attitude is somewhat hesitant and inconsistent), then it is not to be identified with the God of religion. "'God,' in the religious life of ordinary men, is the name not of the whole of things, heaven forbid, but only of the ideal tendency in things, believed in as a superhuman person who calls us to co-operate in his purposes, and who furthers ours if we are worthy. He works in an external environment, has limits, and has enemies. . . . If the absolute exist in addition, then the absolute is only the wider cosmic whole of which our God is but the most ideal portion." "His (God's) function can be taken as not wholly dissimilar to those of the other smaller parts (of the universe)—as similar to our functions consequently." "The pluralistic world is thus more like a federal republic than like an empire or a kingdom."* Very similar views have been expressed in his vigorous popular style by H. G. Wells. "God is not absolute; God is finite . . . a finite God who struggles in his great

* Wm. James, *A Pluralistic Universe* (1909), pp. 34, 321, 79, 310 *f.*, 124 *f.*, 318, 292.

and comprehensive way as we struggle in our weak and silly way—who is *with* us."* Pragmatists like F. C. S. Schiller have further developed the idea of a finite God in striking and suggestive ways.

More balanced and judicial in tone, and yet very sympathetic to the pluralistic point of view, is James Ward's *Realm of Ends* (1911). Ward's philosophy is framed on the pattern of Leibniz's system, but the influence of Leibniz is qualified by that of Lotze and by Ward's own independent thinking. He adopts provisionally the full pluralistic standpoint, which, however, as the argument proceeds he somewhat modifies by means of the theistic hypothesis. As a psychologist he takes his stand on experience, and experience gives us not an Absolute One, but a genuine plurality of individuals. "Pluralism assumes that the whole world is made up of individuals, each distinguished by its characteristic behaviour" (p. 51), "that there exists an indefinite variety of selves, some indefinitely higher, some indefinitely lower than ourselves. But even the highest, if there be a highest, will, it is assumed, be only *primus inter pares*, one among the many, and not an Absolute really including them" (p. 52). The world is the joint product of these innumerable "free agents" mutually striving for "the best *modus vivendi*" (p. 80), and so fashioning a stable system analogous to a social order or a state. The medium in which

* H. G. Wells, *Mr. Britling Sees it Through*, p. 397. See his *God, the Invisible King, passim.*

these multitudes of individuals work is real time, which involves duration, change, evolution—not evolution merely in its literal sense of the unfolding or making patent of what is already latent, but in the sense of epigenesis or creative synthesis (corresponding to Bergson's "creative evolution") —*i.e.*, the production of really new properties and new values. Instead of the timeless Absolute as the sole reality, we have here a strong insistence on historical development in time as constituting reality. But Ward goes beyond both William James and Bergson in seeking a guarantee of ultimate unity and harmony in the world. According to Bergson, there is no distant end or aim to direct the course of evolution, but to Ward history shows that all development is towards more and more unity and harmony and towards the production of apparently over-individual ends. And here "the final goal of evolution comes into sight, not a pre-established harmony, but the eventual consummation of a perfect commonwealth, wherein all co-operate and none conflict, wherein the many may become one, one realm of ends" (p. 435). This is the "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves." Here Ward goes beyond the limits of radical pluralism, and beyond William James with his "wild universe" which gives no guarantee that things will end well. Pluralism can give no guarantee of ultimate unity and harmony, hence the sense of its inadequacy leads Ward on to Theism. We are led to conceive a more fundamental standpoint than that of

the Many—namely, that of the One that would at once furnish an *ontological* unity and insure a *teleological* unity—*i.e.*, the One as ultimate source of the Many and ultimate end of their ends (p. 442). The idea of God is necessary to unify the world and to give meaning to time, history, and progress. Thus Ward's position may be defined as Pluralism supplemented by Theism. But though God is the ground of the world and its Creator, the creation implies a limitation of God. For the world consists of created creatures who are themselves creators possessing freedom and power of initiative. This, however, is *self*-limitation rather than an externally imposed finiteness. "It means a living God with a living world, not a potter God with a world of illusory clay, not an inconceivable abstraction that is only infinite and absolute because it is beyond everything and means nothing" (p. 444).

We reserve certain criticisms and comments on Pluralism for our next (and final) section. We have no space to outline the theistic pluralism of Hastings Rashdall (the Absolute is not God alone, but God and all other spirits forming with Him a system or unity), or the non-theistic pluralism of J. E. McTaggart (the Absolute is a spiritual unity after the manner of a society such as a college, but without a central and dominant Spirit or God). Nor can we discuss the important philosophical movements of recent years which are not pluralistic in the sense that the above-mentioned systems are, but which have this in common with

them, that they strongly insist on the reality and importance of time, evolution, history, progress, in opposition to the older monism and idealism which represent these as mere appearances of a timeless and immutable Absolute. We refer to Bergson's doctrine of duration or concrete time as constituting the very stuff of reality, and the doctrine held in common by neo-realists and neo-idealists that time, change, progression, are ultimate characteristics of the universe as such. Nothing is more remarkable in recent philosophy than this coincidence between the realistic and idealistic extremes, as represented especially by the neo-realist S. Alexander and the Italian neo-idealists Croce and Gentile, who agree that the universe is history through and through and that nothing outside this progression in time is real. The British idealist Bosanquet, however, remains loyal to the monistic tradition and maintains, against the strong current of modern thought, that whilst time is in the Absolute, the Absolute is not in time. This whole problem of the relation of the Absolute to time and of the reality or otherwise of duration and history has an important bearing on the main questions we are discussing—viz., the relation of the religious idea of God to the philosophical idea of the Absolute and the question of the alleged finiteness or self-limitation of God. Here we are only pointing out the strong trend of recent thought in the matter.

III.

It is now time for us to bring to a head our discussion of monism and pluralism and to state positively our own conclusions. From what we have said it will be inferred that we sympathize with the protest of Pluralism against the idea of an omnipotent and all-engulfing Absolute, and with its effort to find room in the system of reality for finite individuals possessing a certain measure of autonomy and capable of entering into free personal relationship with God. The monistic doctrine of the unity of the world must be modified in such a way as to safeguard the rights and values of human personality and of purposive activity in a temporal world. It is not enough to insist, as Bradley does on the last page of his *Appearance and Reality*, that Reality is spiritual, unless that assertion carries with it the ultimate and inalienable value of individual persons within the whole system of things. Nor is it enough to identify God with the Supreme Reality if that is taken to mean that God is a static, self-contained Being that cannot function dynamically in time and cannot enter into reciprocal intercourse with finite spirits. The religious consciousness, as well as a true philosophy, requires a God who shall be active in all the world's endeavour and shall at the same time welcome and inspire the free co-operation of finite persons in the working out of His purposes, rather than a God whose over-

whelming omnipotence leaves no room in the universe for any will but His own.

And yet it is equally true that the relation between man and God cannot be adequately stated in terms of the relation of one finite being to another. To regard God as merely "the first among His equals," like a popularly elected Prime Minister in a democratic government, is to fall far short of the highest insight alike of religion and of philosophy. God cannot be treated as merely a member of a series, though He be ranked far above all the others within the series; He is more than one link in a vast chain, though that link be conceived as immensely larger and stronger than all the others. To regard Him, with James, as "only one of the eaches" in a distributive world, with "functions similar to ours," or to think, with Howison, of all other spirits as ontologically underived, eternally co-existing with God in their own right, is to imperil the uniqueness of God which is essential both to religious experience and to a rational explanation of the world's unity. While in one sense He is akin to man, in another sense He is *sui generis*, inasmuch as He is the ultimate source and sustaining principle of all life and being. Whatever meaning be attached to the idea of creation—whether it be regarded as an act in time ("creation out of nothing" as in the more popular and anthropomorphic view), or as a continuous process (in which case the idea of God as Creator merges in that of God as the world's

ground and support, in accordance with the old theological doctrine that God's function as Creator is not really distinguishable from His function as Sustainer of the world)—in any case it is difficult to see how the conception of creatorship as belonging to the one God is to be dispensed with without imperilling the world's unity and, indeed, its very existence. His creatorship stands for His unstinted impartation of Himself to the world on the one hand, and the world's utter dependence on Him for its existence on the other. God, then, we regard as the inexhaustible creative source of all being, in whom we live and move and have our being, who is immanent in the world though not identical with it, who is the ultimate fountain of all resource and power. He is also the source of all those values and ideals which are an ever-present reality, but which are also the final goal of the cosmic process and of human progress. An extreme pluralism breaks up the one universe into an infinitude of mutually exclusive worlds. (A rational pluralism—*i.e.*, one that is modified by a right kind of monism, recognizes an objective common world which is the medium of men's activity and interaction. It recognizes a natural order and a moral order which are not the product of finite minds acting jointly or severally, but which are the very condition of their being able to act and to co-operate at all. The freedom of individuals, though it is very real within its own range, is conditioned and limited by the laws of the objective world within which it functions.)

It always operates within a *given* environment. Otherwise it would not be liberty but the sheerest licence and chaos. A trustworthy and relatively stable environment is necessary as a condition of rational and moral action. God is the creator of that common environment which is the realm of law and order. The fact that there are such things as law and order at all is best accounted for by tracing the world back to one creative rational spirit as its source.

If, then, man's freedom while real is yet limited and conditioned by the laws of the natural, moral, and social order, what are we to say of God's freedom? Is that, too, limited by the world He has created? And especially are His freedom and power limited by the plurality of persons to whom He has imparted the gift of self-determination and initiative? We would answer that some real limitation of the Deity does seem to be implied in the view we have taken. It is not, however, limitation imposed upon Him by some alien and independent power external to Him, but internal, voluntary self-limitation which is in one sense real limitation, though in another sense it is a manifestation of power. There can be no such thing even to God as unconditional omnipotence. Impossibilities must exist to God as well as to men, and impossible things not even omnipotence can accomplish. God cannot act in a way that would be inconsistent with His own rational and ethical nature. He cannot make a part to be equal to the whole, or cause a thing to be and not to be

at the same time, or square a circle, or make the true to be false or the false true by a mere fiat. The fact that two and two make four and cannot make five in a sense limits the scope of infinity itself. But in these and any similar cases that can be thought of, God is not limited by a world of truth and reality which is foreign to Him, but by a world which is the expression of His own nature. A being who could do anything conceivable and inconceivable would be a being without any distinct attributes or nature or character. Self-limitation is an expression of power, not of weakness. A God who is sheer irresponsible power without aim or direction or restraint were one that could command neither worship nor respect. It is only power which is controlled by reason and love that is divine and adorable. A God who in this sense exercises self-restraint and acts only within the limits defined by His rational self-consistency and ethical purpose cannot appropriately be called a finite God. He is only limited in the sense that He chooses to respect the laws of the universe which are the expression of His own nature and character. If we are to use human analogies, we may say that the methods of His government are more like those of a constitutional monarch than of an Oriental despot whose power is arbitrary and irresponsible. But the constitution which He thus respects is not an external fact existing independently of Him, but is His own nature objectified.

This helps us to understand, not only His

relation to the physical universe, but His relation to moral beings whom He has created in His own image and after His own likeness. Character is not born, but made, and made from within rather than from without—though its "raw material" and the laws and conditions of its development are *given*, not made. This implies real freedom, freedom within limits which define it and make it possible. And human freedom, if real and not illusory, must imply a limitation of the divine activity. It implies that God restrains His omnipotent power within the field of human life, that men may have "elbow room," so to speak, wherein to grow in relative freedom and to exercise initiative and self-determination. But that freedom is itself the gift of God, and would be impossible without divine self-communication. Hence it does not make God "finite" in the sense in which that term ought to be used, but is a manifestation of His power and love.

> "God s all, man's nought;
> But also, God, whose pleasure brought
> Man into being, stands away
> As it were a hand-breadth off, to give
> Room for the newly-made to live,
> And look at Him from a place apart,
> And use His gifts of brain and heart,
> Given, indeed, but to keep for ever."*

These words bring out the absolute priority and uniqueness of God on the one hand, and man's relative freedom and independence implying divine

* R. Browning, "Christmas Eve."

self-limitation on the other. They are, of course, pictorial and suggestive rather than technically exact. Such expressions as "stands away" and "a place apart" might seem to imply God's sheer transcendence in relation to man. This is partly compensated for by the expressions "gift," "given," which to some extent imply the divine immanence. God's immanence needs, however, to be interpreted as something more intimate than the giving of gifts by a donor who apparently undertakes no further responsibilities. It must include His constant inner presence as Illuminator and Inspirer and Guide. But if we are to safeguard spiritual values and the inviolable sanctity of human personality, God must be understood as ever present and active in man, not as irresistible force, but as the persuasive and sustaining power of goodness, truth, and love.

Is God, then, identical with the Absolute? The answer is implied in what we have already said. If by the Absolute is meant the sum-total of reality, then, as Sorley says, God and the Absolute will not be identical, for there are real events and real beings which do not manifest the divine nature. There are events and deeds which are not the expression of His will and not in harmony with His purpose. Hence God cannot be identical with the totality of things, or with the Absolute as so defined. If on the other hand the Absolute be defined as the Supreme Reality, in the sense of the original source, the ever-present sustaining power, and the ultimate goal of all things, then

God is the Absolute Being.) Nothing less than that Supreme Reality can be worshipped as God or can be accepted as a philosophical explanation of the world. And "there is nothing outside of such a God in the sense of being fully independent of His being or will. The independence of finite beings is a restricted independence communicated by the divine will. If we conceive God as unable to limit Himself in this way, then this conception also limits his power."* (God, then, is the Supreme Reality of the universe, but to call Him the Absolute is misleading because ambiguous. As we understand Him, God is not the imperturbable, detached Absolute of some monistic philosophies, a solitary being dwelling in stagnant felicity secure from the world's turmoil and strife, equally tolerant of evil and of good because infinitely transcending both. He is the Living God, who stands in essential relation to the flux of time and history, who "takes sides," fights for righteousness against evil, is our Intimate Companion, Immanuel, God with us, the Captain of our salvation, who suffers pain and agony because of the world's sin, who has Calvary at the heart of Him, whose suffering is redemptive, who is indeed the eternal Redeemer of the world. God is Love, and "love" implies a "loved" one as well as a lover, as Augustine long ago said. Whether this further implies, as

* See W. R. Sorley, *Moral Values and the Idea of God* (1918), pp. 475, 493. This book, and Pringle-Pattison's *Idea of God*, of recent contributions to this subject, are those which best represent the present writer's convictions.

Augustine and many other Christian theologians have maintained, that God is essentially and eternally a society, that He is, in fact, a Trinity of persons, we cannot here proceed to inquire. It must suffice to say that the goal of the divine activity seems to be the fashioning of a perfect society, a spiritual community which may be variously described as the City of God, the Kingdom of God, and, most intimately of all, the Household or Family of God (Eph. ii. 19). This spiritual unity of souls which shall be one in love and purpose and fellowship is something infinitely richer than the barren unity of the self-contained and self-sufficient Absolute of some philosophies and the self-centred God of some theologies.

This is the vision which Leibniz had towards the end of his *Monadology*. "Therefore, spirits are able to enter into a sort of social relationship with God, and with respect to them He is not only what an inventor is to his machine (as is His relation to the other created things), but He is also what a prince is to His subjects, or even what a father is to his children. Whence it is easy to conclude that the totality of all the spirits must compose the city of God—that is to say, the most perfect state that is possible under the most perfect monarch. This city of God, this truly universal monarchy, is a moral world within the natural world." And there is perfect "harmony between the physical realm of Nature and the moral realm of grace; that is to say, between God considered as the architect of the mechanism of the world and

God considered as the Monarch of the divine city of spirits" (§§ 84-87). This perfect commonwealth of spirits united together under God's fatherly sovereignty is not so much an accomplished fact as the eventual consummation of all things, the final goal of the evolutionary process under the guidance of the Divine Spirit. Similarly, Paul declared it to be the purpose of God "that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth," and that men and nations should be "no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God" (Eph. i. 10, ii. 19). Such was the consummation which Christ too desired when he prayed "that they may all be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee" (John xvii. 21). It is in this sense, and not in the sense of a pantheistic absorption, that God is to be "all in all."

IT was only after he had sent the manuscript of this book to the publishers that the author found time to read Professor Rudolf Otto's important and suggestive work (E. Tr., *The Idea of the Holy*, 1923). Had he read it previously, he would doubtless have been helped by it to do more justice to certain points of view which he has, perhaps, unduly slurred over; but he would not have radically modified his standpoint. In a brief note he cannot deal adequately with Otto's views. He can only indicate briefly how they stand related to his own.

According to Otto, the religious life is something absolutely specific and unique, and demands a quite distinctive category of interpretation. It cannot be interpreted in terms of the Good, the Beautiful, the True, however much these may enter the religious life as secondary factors. Its category of value is *the Holy*. Inasmuch as the idea of the holy has become predominantly an ethical one (=the perfectly good), Otto coins a new term to stand for "the holy" *minus* its moral and rational factors—that is, for the "unique original feeling-response, which can be in itself ethically neutral and claims consideration in its own right." This new term is "the numinous." The purely religious or numinous state of mind is

sui generis and irreducible to any other. The essential feature in it is the "creature-feeling," the feeling of "self-abasement into nothingness before an overpowering, absolute might of some kind," the character of which cannot be expressed verbally. The deity is felt as unapproachable mystery and awful power, creating terror and blank wonder, yet having in it something strangely fascinating and attractive. Otto recognizes the importance of the ethical and rational factors, but in essence religion is non-rational and non-ethical.

In some points this bears close resemblance to views which we have urged in this book. (1) We have maintained that religion in its origin is a sense of *awe and mystery* in the presence of an indefinable, incalculable power of a supraphysical kind (pp. 44-47). We have also urged that the feeling of awe and the sense of mystery, though in sublimated forms, survive in the higher religions and are essential features of the religious attitude. (2) We have sought to safeguard the *uniqueness* and relative independence of religion as distinguished from other types of experience and behaviour, such as morality, art, science, and the "secular" life generally. We did not, however, understand the uniqueness (as Otto does) in the sense that religion is concerned with a wholly distinctive category of value, the non-ethical and non-rational "holy." On the contrary we suggested that religion is concerned with the same ultimate values as those which function as norms in other types of experience. The contrast is clearly seen

in the sentence near the top of page 68 of this book ("It may be true . . . "). This sentence would possibly have been somewhat different if the author had read Otto before writing it, but he cannot think his view would have been fundamentally different. We venture to suggest the following criticisms, which must be briefly and therefore inadequately stated:

1. According to Otto, the character of the numen or deity cannot be verbally or conceptually expressed; it can only be *felt*. It is ineffable. To call it "good," for instance, is merely to use a symbol or ideogram, and not to define it accurately, for its nature is essentially indefinable. It is to ethicize and rationalize that which is non-ethical and non-rational. But surely this process of rationalizing and ethicizing the object of religious experience is not a mere non-essential refinement. It is the very essence and meaning of religious progress *qua* religious. The "holy" has to be related organically to the categories of goodness, beauty, and truth as internally necessary to each other, otherwise it remains non-religious as well as non-ethical and non-rational. *All* the values—the good, the true, the beautiful—are holy or sacred in the sense that they possess absolute worth. Micah was not a non-religious rationalist when he insisted that religion was ethical, and asked: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" It is no service to religion to reduce it to dumb, inarticulate feeling. To *articulate* the

numinous feeling in terms of the categories of goodness, truth, and beauty, is, we repeat, the very meaning of religious progress. To call the deity "ineffable" is to call it, with Spencer and the agnostics, "unknown and unknowable."

2. Otto's numen is the "wholly other," that which falls quite outside the sphere of the usual, the familiar, the intelligible, is incommensurable with the rest of our knowledge and experience, supramundane, transcendent. But how can we have any relation at all with a "*wholly* other"? We have recognized the uniqueness of God, His creatorship and transcendence (pp. 263, 297 *f.*). But to be "wholly other" is to be for us nothing at all, conceived or felt. To be sheerly transcendent is to be out of all relation to us. The progress of religion consists in the progressive appropriation and assimilation of the mysterious "beyond," the domesticating of the alien supramundane Power so that it is experienced as a friendly and kindred spirit. The God of Christianity is not only Creator and Sovereign, but Father. While the feeling of His sublimity and distance is retained, the complementary truth of His *affinity* and nearness to man is strongly emphasized (man as created in God's "image," the child of a heavenly "Father"). This idea of spiritual affinity is no merely external accretion or refinement, but is essential to the true development of religious experience (*cf.* pp. 152 *f.*).

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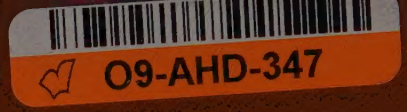
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